

Statement of Sean Hodgson

I, **Sean Hodgson**, Regional Operations Manager - City Services, c/- Brisbane City Council, 266 George St, Brisbane, in the State of Queensland, state on oath as follows:

1. Attachment "SH-1" is a copy of a notice from the Commissioner of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry (**Commission**) dated 21 April 2011 requiring me to provide a statement to the Commission (**Notice**). This statement is provided in response to the Notice.
2. For the purposes of preparing this statement, I have had access to Council's business records and to my staff to obtain information relevant to the Notice. Unless otherwise specified, the information set out below represents my best recollection of events from my own knowledge and with the benefit of having reviewed the documents attached to this statement.
3. I have been working for Brisbane City Council (**Council**) for about 11 years. I have held my current role, as Regional Operations Manager - City Services in the Compliance & Regulatory Service branch (**CaRS**), since November 2010. Prior to my current role, my roles within Council were as follows:
 - (a) Regional Manager for the CaRS Central and East Regions for approximately eighteen months;
 - (b) Principal Officer of Community Safety for approximately six years; and
 - (c) Program Officer, followed by Senior Program Officer of Community Safety for approximately three years.

The Roles of the Local Disaster Coordination Centre, CaRS and the Rapid Response Group

4. My day-to-day role involves operational management of Council's City Services area within CaRS branch. CaRS consists of about 500 employees across a number of different areas and disciplines. Ordinarily, CaRS is responsible for all aspects of regulation and enforcement for the City of Brisbane. As part of its regulatory responsibilities, CaRS provides support through the following three tiers which make up part of the City Services area:
 - (a) Central Parking team which consists of about 46 Council officers;
 - (b) Environmental Management team which consists of about 22 Council officers; and


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- (c) Rapid Response Group (**RRG**) which was first established, in part, in response to the Gap storm event in 2008. The RRG was Council's first 24/7 enforcement and response team and comprises 29 Council officers supported by 5 supervisory and support staff.
5. The City Services division was at the forefront of CaRS' response to the January 2011 flood event, however some 250 or so operational staff from across Council were also involved in the regional incident management teams.
6. I set out below a summary of some matters, to the best of my recollection, which were relevant to CaRS, arising out of Council's response to the January 2011 flood event:
- (a) the Brisbane Local Disaster Coordination Centre (**LDCC**) was stood up on the evening of Sunday 9 January 2011;
- (b) at around 2.46pm on Monday 10 January 2011, a Warning Order was issued by Bryce Hertslet, CaRS Operations Director (**Warning Order**), to the relevant CaRS operational teams. Bryce Hertslet had prepared the Warning Order and as Regional Operations Manager, I had signed off on the Warning Order before it was issued. Attachment "**SH-2**" is a copy of the Warning Order.
- (c) Following the issue of the Warning Order, CaRS' Disaster Management Operations was stood up on the morning of Tuesday 11 January 2011. Appendix A of the Warning Order sets out the CaRS Disaster Management Operations command structure during the January 2011 flood event. As set out in this diagram, Peter Jasper of CaRS was deployed to the LDCC as the Rapid Assessment Team (**RAT**) Team Leader and the CaRS Liaison Officer to the LDCC.
- (d) At around 12.57am on Tuesday 11 January 2011, Bryce Hertslet distributed CaRS' Commencing Instruction which detailed each CaRS teams' roles (**Commencing Instruction**). Again, Bryce Hertslet had prepared the Commencing Instructions and I had signed off on the document before it was issued. Attachment "**SH-3**" is a copy of the Commencing Instruction and its annexures.
- (e) Following the issue of the Commencing Instruction, CaRS' command centre would issue a daily Fragmentation Order (or a "**FRAGO**" as they are referred to by Council officers) which updated the information provided to CaRS officers and directed CaRS' operations. Attachment "**SH-4**" contains copies of the 13 daily FRAGOs issued during the January 2011 flood event.

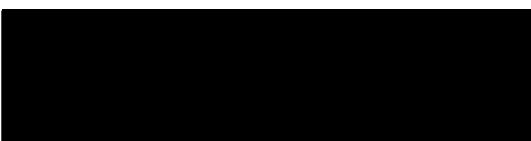

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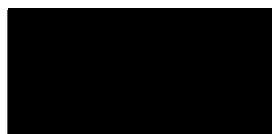
7. CaRS' response to the January 2011 flood event was conducted in the following four phases:
- (a) preparation;
 - (b) response;
 - (c) recovery; and
 - (d) post activity administration.
8. Generally, CaRS worked very closely with the LDCC's Field Operations Group and all information obtained by CaRS officers would be provided to the LDCC by way of CaRS Situation Reports. Attachment "SH-5" contains copies of the CaRS Situation Reports from 11 to 13 January 2011 which, I am informed, have already been provided to the Commission.

Preparation Phase

9. On Tuesday 11 January 2011 and Wednesday 12 January 2011 (prior to the flood peak - the **Preparation Phase**), CaRS officers were involved in the following tasks:
- (a) distribution of warning notices to residential and commercial properties which were identified as likely to be flooded. A copy of the warning letter which was distributed to properties appears as Annex B (at page BCC.051.0554) of the Commencing Instruction (**Property Warning Notice**);
 - (b) placement of warning notices on vehicles parked in areas which were identified as likely to be flooded. A copy of the warning notice which was distributed to vehicles appears as Annex C (at page BCC.051.0027) of the Commencing Instruction (**Vehicle Warning Notice**); and
 - (c) RRG's conduct of a risk assessment of properties listed in Annex D (at page BCC.051.0356) of the Commencing Instruction as these properties were identified as being subject to flooding (**Risk Assessments**).
10. The above tasks are discussed in detail below in relation to questions 1(a), 1(b) and 1(c) of the Notice.



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Response Phase

11. After the flood peak on Wednesday 12 January 2011 to about Monday 17 January 2011 (the **Response Phase**), CaRS officers were primarily involved in the following:
- (a) community engagement and assistance tasks as directed by the LDCC; and
 - (b) CaRS officers allocated to the Rapid Assessment Team (**RAT**) were responsible for conducting rapid damage assessments of flooded properties (approximately 10,000 in total) under the direction of the LDCC (**Damage Assessments**).

Recovery and Post Activity Administration Phases

12. Throughout the recovery and post activity administration phases (i.e. from about Monday 17 January 2011 onwards), CaRS has provided the following services:
- (a) strategic intelligence, surveillance and reconnaissance capability (e.g. port-a-loo checks, park inspections, volunteer check points);
 - (b) conducting mobile patrols of approximately 1,300 streets (referred to as "Streetscape") and providing the LDCC with general intelligence on issues such as roadside cleaning, dump sites, road obstructions, new flooding and vegetation damage;
 - (c) providing a quick reaction team for short notice call outs;
 - (d) assisting with animal care at the animal shelters and evacuation centres;
 - (e) providing staff at the evacuation centres and ad hoc assistance; and
 - (f) providing coordination and support to the Queensland Fire & Rescue Services (**QFRS**) on behalf of the LDCC.
13. However, some of the above activities (in particular (c) to (f)) also occurred during the Response Phase.
14. The information collected through the Risk Assessments and Damage Assessments has now been collated in two databases, one for property damage and one for Streetscape assessments.

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1 (a) A description of the methods used by Council to disseminate information to the community about potential flooding via "door-to-door" methods, particularly by personal interactions between Council officers and residents and by vehicle and letter drops

15. During the January 2011 flood event, CaRS provided warnings to the community in order to allow residents to prepare for the flood and, if necessary, to evacuate their property. As noted above, in the Preparation Phase, Council officers conducted the following tasks:

- (a) Distribution of Property Warning Notices to dwellings and businesses in areas that may be flooded. This involved the following:
 - (i) Council officers conducted a door knock on the relevant property and provided the Property Warning Notice to the resident;
 - (ii) in the event that the Council officer could not speak with the resident, a Property Warning Notice would be left in the property's letterbox; and
 - (iii) as there were a large number of Property Warning Notices to be distributed, where personal interactions occurred, Council officers would generally direct the relevant resident to the content of the Property Warning Notice and would not generally engage in lengthy conversations with the resident. If the Council officer was able to speak to the resident, they would check to see if there were any residents who may require support (e.g. the elderly or disabled) and this information was passed on the LDCC.

- (b) Distribution of Vehicle Warning Notices on vehicles in areas that may be flooded. This involved the following:
 - (i) Vehicle Warning Notices were secured in plastic foolscap sheets and placed on the windscreen of relevant vehicles; and
 - (ii) the Vehicle Warning Notice was designed to advise vehicle owners that the place they had parked was likely to be the subject of flooding. This was primarily for commuter, industrial or commercial parking where the vehicle owner was not likely to receive a Property Warning Notice.

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- (c) RRG's conduct of Risk Assessments of properties listed as "flooded" in Annex D of the Commencing Instruction (discussed below in relation to questions 1(b) and 1 (c) of the Notice).
16. Council does not have the power to direct evacuations of the relevant properties. The role of CaRS officers was to disseminate information in relation to potential flooding in the relevant areas.
17. The priority of work for Council's operational staff was the distribution of Property Warning Notices and Vehicle Warning Notices (together, the **Warning Notices**) and then, later, to assist in the conduct of the Risk Assessments.
18. In order to attend to the above tasks, CaRS officers operated as part of five regional task groups - Central, East, West, South and North. Attachment "**SH-6**" is a map showing the relevant Council regions. CaRS officers within each regional task group were responsible for undertaking the above tasks within their particular region in conjunction with each Regional Incident Management Team (**RIMT**) which arose out of the Local Asset Services branch of Council and also formed part of the structure of Council's response to the January 2011 flood event.
19. On Wednesday 12 January 2011, I recall that Council received an email from Energex which provided a list of buildings within the CBD that would have their power shut down. Attachment "**SH-7**" is a copy of that email and a list with handwritten notes from who I believe to be Peter Jasper, CaRS liaison to the LDCC. Council officers were also deployed to conduct community service patrols in and around the relevant CBD buildings. Council officers primarily informed residents/occupants of the power shut downs and provided information to evacuees in relation to public transport operations.

1 (b) An explanation of what a Scheduled Inspection entails, including 'Rapid Assessment Form Completion'

Preparation Phase

20. During the Preparation Phase, the reference to a "*scheduled inspection*" in the CaRS Situation Reports is essentially a reference to the distribution of the Warning Notices to properties and vehicles in areas that may be flooded, as described in paragraphs 15 to 18 of this statement. The priority at this time was the delivery of the Warning Notices, however, some officers were concurrently tasked with performing Risk Assessments in some of the identified areas where this was possible.

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Response and Recovery Phases

21. During the Response and Recovery Phases, the reference to a "scheduled inspection" in the CaRS Situation Reports is a reference to the RAT's completion of Risk and Damage Assessments for the LDCC.
22. The Damage Assessments were undertaken by completing either the 'Risk Assessment Form' attached at Annex E (at page BCC.051.0557) of the Commencing Instruction (**Risk Assessment Form**) or a "Rapid Damage Assessment Report" form, a copy of which appears as attachment "SH-8" to this statement (**Damage Assessment Form**).
23. RRG's Risk Assessments were conducted on the request of the LDCC, Disaster Intelligence Group. The purpose of the assessment was to collect information for Council to measure overall risk, identify issues and assist with resource deployment during the flood response.
24. Copies of the Risk Assessment Forms were held in the relevant CaRS regional office and the originals were sent to the LDCC. Officers were required to take a photograph of each property and attach a copy of that photograph with the Risk Assessment Form.
25. The completed Damage Assessment Forms were initially sent to the LDCC soon after being completed. However, this process was soon (i.e. within one day) amended and the forms were entered and collated into a database within CaRS regions.
26. The purpose of the Damage Assessments was to gather information in relation to the receding water line and make initial damage assessments to allow the LDCC to plan and coordinate the response and recovery efforts.
27. Council undertook approximately 10,000 risk and damage assessments during the recovery phase.
28. From about Thursday 13 January 2011, the RAT was joined by Queensland Fire & Rescue Services' (QFRS) Rapid Damage Assessment team to assist in further damage assessment. A QFRS liaison team was co-located with the CaRS Disaster Management Operations Team.


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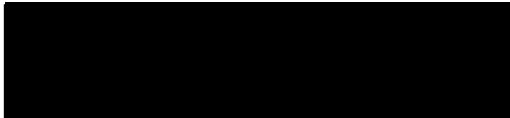
1 (c) An explanation of the process by which properties were identified for the purposes of conducting 'door to door' warnings and/or scheduled inspections

Preparation Phase

29. Predicted flood maps provided by the LDCC, which were attached as Annex A of the Commencing Instruction, were used to identify which properties were likely to be affected, and the Warning Notices were distributed by Council officers to properties within those areas. The original mapping and flooded properties used for initial tasking was based on a 4,000 cumec event. I recall that this was increased to a 12,000 cumec event as at 8.30pm on 11 January 2011 (as noted in FRAGO 1 at page BCC.051.0445). New maps and additional properties were sent to the operational distribution teams as the predicted levels increased.
30. Council officers were also directed, in the Commencing Instruction, to distribute the Warning Notices to properties which were:
- (a) in the immediate vicinity of the properties identified on the flood maps (e.g. neighbours or adjacent low lying streets); and
 - (b) in areas which are known from previous experience, or which appear from the Council officer's assessment, to be potential flood areas,
- even though such properties may not have been marked on the initial flood maps (e.g. Deagon and Sandgate, as noted in the CaRS Situation Report dated 11 January 2011 at 4.00pm at BCC.002.1934 and BCC.002.1936).
31. The LDCC had provided the maps of 'flooded' properties (which I understand was produced by Council's Flood Information Centre). I understand that these properties were ones in which the total land parcel were predicted to be fully inundated. It did not reflect the height of flooding over the land parcel (i.e. whether or not the water would totally inundate the house or just cover the ground).

Response and Recovery Phases

32. The Risk Assessments were to be carried out at all properties that were identified in Annex D (at page BCC.051.0356) of the Commencing Instruction as being potentially 'flooded'.
33. Damage Assessments were carried out on all properties that were effected by flooding, as identified in an Excel spreadsheet provided by the LDCC listing over 10,000 properties that were flooded or partially flooded. Attachment "SH-9" is a copy of this document.



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34. CaRS maintains a database of these properties which summarises the information obtained from both the Rapid Assessment Forms and the Damage Assessments. This information can be used by the QFRS as part of its assessment, as well as the LDCC (and Council generally) to assist in Council's response to the January 2011 flood event.

1 (d) An explanation of the method of prioritising properties for the purposes of conducting 'door to door' warnings and/or Scheduled Inspections

35. As noted above, the Commencing Instructions which were distributed to the regions attached the predicted flooding maps. Each region allocated areas to their staff who then distributed the Warning Notices to letter boxes and vehicles and conducted the Risk Assessments in their designated areas.
36. Some prioritisation was conducted at the regional level based on local knowledge of flood prone areas. Where Council officers could not readily access a property (discussed in paragraphs 37 to 39 below), they would inspect other properties that were accessible and seek to return to the inaccessible property later that day or the next day.

1 (e) The issues which precluded 'door to door' warnings and/or Scheduled Inspections occurring at an identified property (for example issues with access to the area), with a general indication of the locations concerned

37. The issues that precluded the distribution of Warning Notices, and the locations concerned, are contained under the heading "Significant Events" in the CaRS Situation Reports. These included, but were not limited to:
- (a) Road closures in:
 - (i) Central - West End (including Montague Road and James Street), Hill End Tce, Hill End, South Brisbane
 - (ii) North- Robert Lane, Albion, Nicholas Street, Windsor;
 - (iii) West - Indooroopilly, Pullenvale, Auchenflower, Karana Downs, Toowong and Milton;
 - (iv) East - Formosa Road, Gumdale, Manly Road, Manly, Ropley Road, Wynnum West.
 - (b) localised flooding in particular streets; and



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(c) heavy traffic to and/or from effected areas.

38. It is not possible to identify all of the areas that staff were not able to access. Information on areas that could not be accessed was not comprehensively recorded.

39. However, some indication of areas which could not be reached are set out in CaRS notifications to the LDCC, by way of the CaRS Situation Reports, of any areas that Warning Notices could not be distributed to as a result of any of the above issues.

I make this statement conscientiously believing the same to be true, and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1867 (Qld).

Dated 3 May 2011

Signed and declared by Sean Hodgson at
Brisbane in the State of Queensland

this *third* day of *May* 2011

Before me:

[Redacted signature area]

Signature of person before whom the declaration is made

[Redacted signature area]

Signature of declarant

[Redacted name and qualification area]

Full name and qualification of person before whom the declaration is made

[Redacted name area]

Sean Hodgson

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