

25<sup>th</sup> February 2011

Queensland Floods Commission Inquiry,

Dear Sir,

**Ref: Inadequate Information provided by the media on anticipated flood levels.**

In common with many businesses in our area, our property at 27 Rodwell St, Archerfield Q4108 (ref: Lot L2/RP 803037) was subjected to flooding of 1.5metres in our ground level offices and warehouse. This resulted in an economic loss in excess of \$350,000 of computers, telephony, office and industrial equipment, vehicles, customer records and documentation as well as requiring a complete rebuild of the ground floor office areas.

Whilst we were expecting the flood, the water levels that entered our building were a surprise.

The purpose of this letter is to assert that insufficient detailed information on anticipated flood levels contributed to the economic cost of the flood. It is disappointing that this same issue was identified after the 1974 floods (Ref: [http://www.bom.gov.au/hydro/flood/qld/flid\\_reports/brisbane\\_jan1974.pdf](http://www.bom.gov.au/hydro/flood/qld/flid_reports/brisbane_jan1974.pdf) Bureau of Meteorology Report on the 1974 Floods pages 45 and 46)

As a way of illustrating the problem, we detail below the pro-active measures we took to check our vulnerability to the expected flood levels:

1. Referred to BCC's web site and flood map that showed that Rodwell Street was in a potential flood zone.
2. Referred to BCC's FloodWise Property Report (Reference 1234916) for our property.
3. This report showed that for our property the expected flood level for a 1 in 100 year flood was 8metres above mean sea level.
4. This report also showed that the property's lowest ground level was 7metres and the highest ground level (the warehouse and ground floor office floor) was 8metres above AHD.
5. The highest defined flood level (DFL) for the property is shown as 8metres with the source for this flood being the river.
6. The local ABC radio station was providing flood alerts indicating an anticipated flood level in the Brisbane River of 5.5metres.
7. We checked the above referenced BOM report on the 1974 floods and noted the date and time of the maximum flood level in 1974. We then checked the historical tide data for that day against the high tide data expected at the Brisbane bar for January 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup> 2011. The high tide on the 13<sup>th</sup> Jan 2011 at 1.78metres was noted to be less than the high tide that occurred in the 1974 floods.
8. With the above information in hand we concluded that with a property ground level 7 to 8metre, an anticipated flood level of 5.5metres, and a lower high tide level than 1974, our

building should not be inundated. This was consistent with our 14year history of not being effected by floods in the area.

However subsequent events proved this assessment to be incorrect.

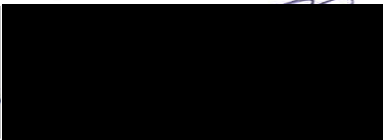
In researching for reasons why our decision concerning relocation of assets had been so incorrect we have learned the following:

1. All references by the media to the anticipated flood levels are related to the Brisbane City Gauge located at the bottom of Edward Street. The location of the flood level reference point was not made clear in the media broadcasts.
2. When the peak flood level at the Edward St gauge of 4.46m was reached on Jan 13<sup>th</sup> the flood level at the Oxley Creek at Corinda was higher at an estimated 9.4metres.
3. As Oxley Creek is the source of the water that floods the Archerfield and Rocklea areas it is the anticipated flood level nearest this location that is relevant to our property not the Brisbane CBD gauge. This conclusion will also apply for locations further upstream of the river.
4. Based on a water level of 9.4metres at Corinda it is now clear why our ground floor offices and warehouse (with a floor level of 8metres above AHD) had water ingress of 1.5metres throughout.

Had the anticipated flood level at a measuring gauge relevant to our property location be made public then a different decision regarding the relocation of equipment and documents would have been made. Our building has first floor storage and offices where valuable assets could have been relocated in time. This would have considerably reduced our economic loss due to the flood.

It is hoped that the above information will assist in the formulation of new procedures that will improve the information provided by BCC and the media thus reducing the effects of any future Brisbane river floods.

Yours sincerely,



Michael S Baker CPEng (Rtd) MIEAust

Managing Director

Mathand Pty Ltd

