

Background

The Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry is conducting an independent examination of the 2010-11 floods.

The Commission has a Terms of Reference which will report on a range of related topics including:

- preparation and planning by federal, state and local governments, emergency services and the community
- private insurers and their responsibilities
- all aspects of the response to the 2010/2011 flood events, particularly measures taken to inform the community and protect life, private and public property
- measures to manage the supply of essential services
- adequacy of forecasts and early warning systems
- implementation of systems operation plans for dams, and
- land use planning.

The PIA QLD Division is particularly interested in the terms of reference relating to land use planning. In the analysis of recent events in Queensland, the role of urban planners and land use planning decisions is important. In April 2011 the PIA QLD Division provided a submission to the Commission raising a number of issues which we believe need more research and subsequently the Commission has asked for clarification on a number of key issues. The following outlines a response to each point raised by the commission.

1a. Is the Q 100 the most appropriate standard to identify a natural hazard area?

These are matters which PIA raised with the commission and we believe they require further discussion across the industry with stakeholders. The tight timelines did not permit us to thoroughly undertake this consultation however we are happy to meet further to discuss these key issues.

In terms of the questions raised about the Q100, PIA QLD Division acknowledged the Q100 has been a standard adopted for a long time and it is an acceptable standard. Review of the Q100 as a standard is a complex issue and one which would require significant input from engineering and other experts in this area.

In terms of the Q100 versus a Defined Flood Level (DFL), the adoption of a DFL in some circumstances may have some advantages. However, it is important to realise this information may not be available for many parts of the State. PIA QLD Division does acknowledge there could be some benefits of using the DFL (plus 300 mm) where this information is documented.

As outlined in our earlier submission, there is some confusion about Q100 and a DFL. There is a community perception that Q100 is a once in 100 year flood event. It is our understanding the Q100 is an expression of probability of the likelihood of the occurrence of

a flood of a given size or larger in a given year. PIA QLD Division would like to reiterate this fact needs to be better conveyed to the community.

Alternatively, the Defined Flood Event (DFE) is a flood event of a defined size adopted by local governments to establish the DFL for building and development purposes. The DFL (expressed in AHD) is the estimated height that water will rise to when a Defined Flood Event occurs. The DFL is the minimum level that development must achieve in a given location to ensure a reasonable level of flood immunity.

It is our understanding the Q100 may be revisited as part of the review of the SPP 1/03 Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide (SPP 1/03). The review of the SPP 1/03 is currently being undertaken (between 2011 and 2013) and PIA QLD Division has provided an initial response to the Department of Community Safety (DCS) on this matter. Please find attached a copy of our submission provided to the DCS in February 2011 on this matter.

1b. How to identify the impacts of Climate Change in relation to flood risk?

The issue of Climate Change is extremely complex with a range of interplaying factors. In terms of the impacts of Climate Change in relation to flood risk, PIA QLD Division believes this is undefinable because there are risks in all development. The acceptable risk is different for each circumstance (eg each land use, nature of development etc).

PIA would like to direct the Commission of Inquiry to the PIA website, which contains numerous resources about climate change particularly in relation to land use planning. <http://www.planning.org.au/policy/climate-change>

1c. New development and existing vulnerable areas

These questions require us to consult with our broader membership and we do not wish to present views that are not representative of our broader membership. We would welcome a meeting with the commission to discuss these matters further.

2a. Defined flood level

As outlined above the Q100 has been a standard adopted for a long time and it is an acceptable standard.

Information about a DFL may not be available for many parts of the State. PIA QLD Division does acknowledge that there could be some benefits of using the DFL (plus 300 mm) where this information is documented.

3a. Development processes

These questions require us to consult with our broader membership and we do not wish to present views that are not representative of our broader membership. We would welcome a meeting with the commission to discuss these matters further.

3b Regulatory power and development processes

PIA QLD Division supports planning decisions being linked to the Q100. PIA Qld Division also supports the adoption of the DFL (plus 300mm) where this is known and documented in

publicly available information. Current regulatory control in Queensland is a managed risk on flooding and a number of other issues and in most instances the current structure works.

PIA QLD Division supports this information being publicly available if known by the Council and making the community aware of potential flooding for building design purposes.

4 A review of SPP 1/03 Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide (SPP 1/03)

The DCS is responsible for the administration of *State Planning Policy 1/03: Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide (SPP 1/03)*. SPP 1/03 is due to expire on 31 August 2013.

DCS is leading a review into SPP1/03, in accordance with the Statutory Instruments Program for 2010/11, as approved by Cabinet in March 2010. The review is being conducted in accordance with the *State Planning Instruments Program Guideline*, produced by the Department of Infrastructure and Planning.

The PIA QLD Division has undertaken a review of the SPP 1/03 and provided a response to the DCS in February 2011. A copy of our response is attached.

4b Review of SPP 1/03 Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide (SPP 1/03) - Exemptions

The PIA QLD Division believes the SPP 1/03 should apply to all development in Queensland and no development or area should be exempt including Transit Oriented Developments (which seek to increase density) and designated Urban Development Areas. There is little point having a State Planning Policy if it does not apply to all areas in the State.