



**QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS**



Occurrence #: _____

Statement no.: _____ Date: **16/03/2011**

Statement of

Name of witness: **KELLY, James Raymond**

Date of birth: [redacted] Age: [redacted] Occupation: **Police Officer**

Police officer taking statement

Name: _____

Rank: _____ Reg. no.: _____

Region/Command/Division: _____ Station: _____

Statement:

1. James Raymond KELLY states:-
2. I am Sergeant of Police, O.I.C. Alpha Station and commenced that role on 08/03/1995.
3. I was sworn in as a member of the Queensland Police Service on 04/03/1977.
4. I have 34 years of policing experience having served at the following station and duties:-
 - March 1977 to June 1977 Fortitude Valley, General Duties,
 - June 1977 to October 1977 Redcliffe, General Duties,
 - October 1977 to November 1979 Townsville, General Duties, Radio Room, Watch House, Traffic Branch, Inquires Office. During this time I was also O.I.C. Castle Hill P.Y.C. and relieved at Magnetic Island and O.I.C. Greenvale.
 - November 1979 to March 1984 Hughenden, General Duties.
 - March 1984 to February 1988 Prairie, O.I.C., General Duties.
 - February 1988 to March 1995 Eidsvold, General Duties.
 - March 1995 to present date Alpha, O.I.C., General Duties.
5. I have participated in desk top exercises and scenarios as part on L.D.M.G. while at Eidsvold and Alpha.
6. In response to the written requirement of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry date 9 March 2011. I provide the following information.

[redacted]

(Witness's signature)

[redacted] 13601

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

7. Upon becoming the Officer in Charge of the Alpha Police Division in March 1995 I was aware of the flooding that had occurred in the division in 1990.

8. I began making myself aware:-

- of the climatic conditions that lead to the event,
- flood height within the town area,
- catchment areas of the watercourses that would impact on water height,
- plans in place for evacuation of the flood plain area,
- what evacuations were made at that time,
- where person were evacuated to,
- supply of essential items,
- how they were made

this was done through contact with the Local Disaster Management Committee, Jericho Shire Council and speaking with residents of the Shire that had been affected by the 1990 event.

9. I had also participated in meetings with the Jericho Shire Council in Flood Mitigation Plans for Alpha and Jericho.


10. I have maintained a close informative relationship with the rural residents within my division who reside and own properties, with the water courses that can affect the Alpha town area in a flood situation and with this communication channel police are well advised when any major flows are noticed.


11. The events I participated in during December 2010 and January 2011 covered both Alpha and Jericho Police Divisions.

12. Since being stationed at Alpha I have become familiar with minor flooding events that have occurred in the Jericho Police Division and have some knowledge of the possible outcomes.

13. The permanent O.I.C. Jericho Police was on recreation leave at the commencement of the incident that affected Jericho.

14. At similar times in the past Alpha Station has been requested to provide a police presence within the Jericho Division along with the assistance of Barcaldine Police Station


(Witness's signature)


(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ 7360/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

15. On the 24th December 2010 I was contact by Sgt Timothy MISSON, O.I.C. Barcaldine Police and he advised that he was at the Jericho Police Station and that he had been advised that the would be a flooding issue within Jericho township. Information he had received from persons up stream of Jordon Creek was that there would be some inundation of Jericho.
16. Sgt MISSON also had a good knowledge of this area as he had been the O.I.C. of Jericho previous to his current position.
17. I along with A/S/C Travis KIRBY attended Jericho and took up with Sgt MISSON and Const Andrew BARANY.
18. I was informed by Sgt MISSON that he and BARANY had completed a door knock of the Jericho township and advised all the residents of the impending situation.
19. Contact was then made with rural residents up stream to gauge the possible water heights.
20. Contact was made with the JAMES family at "Glencoe" JERICHO and water height obtained as there is a measurement post at that property.
21. Dick JAMES was able to give the reading and advise on what heights are needed at that point to equate with an inundation of the Jericho town area and at this time the reading showed it was a water height that would impact on Jericho.
22. Contact was made with Inspector Michael KEYS, District Officer, Longreach Police District and D.D.C. and he was advised of the situation at Jericho.
23. It was then decided that I would remain in Jericho to provide a police presence and that the other officer would return to their stations as that roads to those station would be closed due to flooding.
24. Arrangements were made at these stations to have the availability of "Road Closed" signs at Alpha and Barcaldine to be erected to help with no other person being caught out at Jericho by the flooding.
25. I took up with Janes WILLIAMS, who at the time was in charge of the Spiritus Bush Nurse Clinic in Jericho and who most people turned to when there was no police presence in town and discussed the flooding that would impact on the town.

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(Witness's signature)

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(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)


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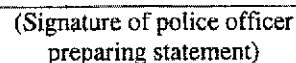
(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

26. It was thought at the time that there would be flooding but not to a level that would affect housing.
27. I also spoke with a number of local residents and was advised that they had commenced or made plans to move their property.
28. At this time a number of local residents moved from their homes to the Town Hall, Darwin and Faraday Street JERICHO, as this is used at an evacuation centre during floods.
29. These people's thoughts were that it was better to do this in the daylight and without water than at night and in water.
30. I then commenced a watch on the water heights around the Jericho Division.
31. I have stated that I was aware of some points of interest to watch regarding rising water in and around Jericho and began to monitor those points.
32. During the night of the 24th December the Capricorn Highway was cut at the Jordon Creek bridge to the east and Alice River bridge to the west.
33. Water also covered the Tumber and Blackall Roads preventing any vehicle movements.
34. The levee bank that is partly constructed did take some water away from the flood plains to the south east of Jericho and diverted it to the west of the town.
35. Water commenced to enter Jericho around 02:00 on the 25th December 2010 across Davy St, between Lyon and Bessemer Streets.
36. As I had been informed by residents it was a slow process, 'like a black snake' it had been described to me, as the water worked its way along the gutter and streets of Jericho during that morning.
37. The water reached a peak late on the afternoon of the 25th December.
38. Although it had peaked it did not cover every street in Jericho with only a minor percentage free of water.
39. I continued to monitor the water heights and check for inundation to any residences.
40. I could find no residence that had inundation into living area; a number had water under them which entered laundries and sheds.


(Witness's signature)


 # 3607
(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)


(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

41. On the 26th December 2010 contact was made with rural residents, upstream from Jericho, and I was informed that the waters had commenced to drop and this was passed onto the DDC.
42. I continued to patrol the Jericho town area and monitor water height.
43. I was not requested by any resident to provide or obtain assistance.
44. While in Jericho I had maintained contact with Jane WILLIAMS, Brett WILLIAMS, her husband and Colin LOUDON. These persons had a good knowledge of the local area and people and were a great assistance to me.
45. I maintained an irregular sitrep to Insp. KEYS while in Jericho and contact with Sgt MISSION as to road condition to the west of Jericho to Barcaldine.
46. During the morning of the 26th December it was noted that the water in Jericho had commenced to drop.
47. Around 14:30 on the 26th December after a discussion with Insp KEYS and Sgt MISSION it was decided that the Capricorn Highway could be opened again with the 'With Caution' signs showing as water was still on the road at Jordon Creek and flood plain to the west of Jericho for a few kilometres.
48. No forced evacuations were carried out in Jericho.
49. The persons that moved to the Town Hall did so of there own free will.
50. I returned to Alpha on the afternoon of the 26th December at about 16:00.
51. At about 20:00 that evening I received a call from Terry GLEESON, 'Rainmore' ALPHA.
52. This property is about 70km south east of Alpha and he advised that he had been speaking with Gordon DAVIDSON, 'Cheshire' and that there had been a fairly large amount of rain in their area, which is part of the catchment of Alpha Creek.
53. GLEESON was advising this as he was aware of how wet the country was and that it was all run off water now.
54. At about 05:00 on the 27th December 2010 a telephone call was received by A/S/C KIRBY advising of heavy rainfall in the Alpha Creek catchment and that water heights were about the levels of the 1990 event on the property.


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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

- 55. Alpha Police also do reading of water heights in the Alpha Creek on behalf of the Bureau of Meteorology using a height gauge on the railway bridge that crosses Alpha Creek at the eastern end of Shakespeare Street ALPHA.
- 56. I was aware due to this fact that there was 5mts of water in Alpha Creek on the afternoon of the 26th December.
- 57. I then went to the residence of Desmond (Des) HOWARD, C.E.O. of Barcaldine Regional Council, to discuss information that had been received.
- 58. HOWARD was the C.E.O. of Jericho Shire Council, prior to the amalgamation of rural council, and was a Deputy C.E.O. when I arrived.
- 59. He was also in charge of Alpha S.E.S. until taking his present position, which requires him to reside in Barcaldine during the week.
- 60. On my arrival at his residence Kevin WILTSHIRE, foreman of Alpha Depot of the B.R.C., was present as he had also been contacted about overnight rainfall in Alpha and Jericho areas.
- 61. After a short discussion it was agreed that due to the rainfall overnight in the catchment that feeds Alpha Creek and that inundation would occur in the flood plain area of Alpha.
- 62. It was also agreed that there would be another inundation of Jericho, which still had water in the town area, and possibly at a greater height than the recent few days.
- 63. I contacted Insp KEYS and advised him of both facts and requested that he supply a police officer to Jericho as staff at this station would be needed in Alpha.
- 64. Plans were made with A/S/C KIRBY and I completing a door knock of the Alpha residences and business houses situated on the known flood area advising the residents of the likelihood of a flood that would reach Alpha some time within the next 24 hrs.
- 65. I then attended the Alpha Hospital and spoke with staff to advise them of probable flooding and to ascertain if they had enough supplies and medication for during the period that the town might be isolated.
- 66. I later met with Des HOWARD, Robert BAUER, C.E.O. of Alpha Office B.R.C. and John MAHON, O.I.C. Q.F.R.A. Alpha at B.R.C. Alpha Office, which would become disaster management office, if declared.


(Witness's signature)

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

- 67. At that time we collated all information available that we had received to identify a possible peak for the Alpha town area.
- 68. It was known that a water height gauge had been placed on Alpha Creek at 'Rivington'.
- 69. It was believed to have been calibrated to read a height at that point that would correspond with the height the water would reach in Alpha.
- 70. Contact was made with Mervyn BERRIGAN, 'Rivington', and requested that he keep watch on the water height at that gauge and advise either Des HOWARD or the police of increase in the heights.
- 71. Throughout the day contact was made with rural residents up stream of Alpha who have a good knowledge of the water height that cause inundation problems with Alpha to gauge a possible height.
- 72. Around mid afternoon BERRIGAN contacted myself and advised that the water had peaked at 'Rivington' at 9mts.
- 73. I attended a telephone meeting Local Disaster Committee at the B.R.C. Alpha office at about 15:00 on the 27th December which was chaired by Rob CHANDLER, Mayor of Barcaldine Regional Council.
- 74. At this meeting Alpha and Jericho flooding was the main topic and planning for and dealing with was discussed.
- 75. S/C Steven LORD had been sent from Barcaldine Station to assist at Jericho.
- 76. It was advised at this time that the peak in Alpha was expected to be 9mts, which was below the 1990 peak of 10.26mts, but would cover that flood plain area of Alpha.
- 77. I had contacted Leslie LEISHMAN, licensee Alpha Golf Club, and he agreed that the club could be used as an evacuation centre for persons leaving the flood plain. (This was also used in 1990 flood as the clubhouse is the largest building to house people out of the flood plain.)
- 78. A/S/C KIRBY and I completed another door knock to find out if everybody was satisfied with their preparations or if they required assistance which we could arrange for them and advising them of the Golf Club being available as an evacuation point.

79. A lot of the people that ~~did leave their~~ residences went to relatives or friend's residence out of the flood plain area.



(Witness's signature)

 #736 81

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

80. Alpha at this time was isolated due to flooding of Native Companion Creek to the east and Jordon Creek and Alice River to the west cutting the Capricorn Hwy and the unsealed road to Clermont and Tambo being cut at numerous floodway and creek crossings.
81. By nightfall nearly all the persons and property that had to be moved out of the flood area had been completed.
82. Patrols were then made by A/S/C KIRBY and me throughout the night.
83. It was seen that about 23:30 water commenced to come across Hooper and Hood Streets, between Tennyson and Milton Street.
84. Water continued to rise in the flood plain area on the 28th December 2010 and reached a height of 9mts.
85. I attended telephone meeting at the B.R.C. Alpha office at 09:00 and 15:00 on that day.
86. I supplied telephone reports to Insp. KEYS on irregular basis throughout the day as I could not access the police station, which was in the flooded area.
87. Later that afternoon Insp. KEYS in company of Vaughan JOHNSON M.L.A. attended Alpha and Jericho by helicopter to inspect the situation.
88. Water remained in the flood plain overnight.
89. About 08:00 on the 29th December 2010 I was informed that there was a problem with the water treatment plant in Alpha.
90. Overnight it was identified that Alpha water tower was losing water and there was a ruptured main somewhere in the flooded area.
91. At this time the flood plain area was isolated from the town water supply.
92. Unlike the 1990 flood Alpha and Jericho did not loose electrical power supply.
93. Patrols were continued throughout the day to keep people out of the flood plain area.
94. 'Road Closed' signs were erected along Moore Street intersection to advice people to stay out of the area.
95. I attended telephone with the L.D.M.C. on that day and advised of outcomes of the plans in place and to come.



(Witness's signature)



(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)
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(Signature of police officer
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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

96. On the afternoon of the 29th December 2010 I was advised that police officers from the P.S.R.T. Brisbane were being flown into Alpha with two officers to assist in Alpha and two to assist at Jericho. (Sgt Brett SEETO, S/C Vince FIORITI, S/C Summer NORTON, Const Ashley KERMOND)
97. I made arrangements for these officers to stay at the Nurses Quarters, Alpha Hospital.
98. On the 30th December 2010 Sgt SEETO and Const KERMOND were taken by helicopter into Jericho to assist there as road transport could not take them into town.
99. Water remained in the flood plain again overnight but had commenced to drop.
100. I attended meeting with Des HOWARD and others and discussed a plan to move residents back into the flood plain area.
101. It was agreed to that no person were to be moved back into the flood plain area until the water had cleared due to Alpha being a septic tank sanitation area and all these tanks were now flooded and a high probability of water being contaminated.
102. It was also decided at this time that all residences needed to be electrically checked for safety before allowing persons that had voluntarily evacuated to return.
103. At this time local electrician Des LAMB and another electrician Leonard COYNE, who was spending Christmas on his parent's property and agreed to assist, commenced to inspect houses.
104. Council workman later were able to locate the ruptured water main and commence to make repairs.
105. I, with the assistance of the P.S.R.T. officer then did a door knock/letter drop explaining what the process was for returning into the flood affected area and thanking people for the patience and assistance.
106. On the 31st December 2010 the electricians continued to check the residence and make safe.
107. At around 11:00 on the 31st December we commenced allowing residents back into the flooded area as water had been resupplied and all residences checked

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(Witness's signature)

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(Justice of the Peace (Qual.))
Commissioner for Declarations's signature

#13601


(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

- 108. A door knock was again used to do this and advice was also given to boil town water for until further notice as the treatment plant had been affected due to flood water getting into the system through the rupture.
- 109. The P.S.R.T. officer remained in Alpha and Jericho until the 2nd January 2011.
- 110. On the 4th January 2011 Alpha and Jericho were visited by the Queensland Premier and Dept Comm. STEWART.
- 111. I held a discussion with Dept Comm. STEWART in which relief was discussed and he then made arrangements for staff from Brisbane to attend and assist.
- 112. On the 5th January Sgt Neville COX, Sgt Robert GARDNER and S/C Wendy FLETCHER arrived to assist, with Sgt COX and S/C FLETCHER in Alpha and Sgt GARDNER at Jericho.
- 113. Sgt GARDNER had previously been stationed at Alpha and had a working knowledge of both divisions.
- 114. In the time when people were evacuated I only had one minor confrontation with a resident about the time being taken to make sure that it was all safe for their return to their residence and when explained what was required it was quickly defused and agreed with.
- 115. The communication between L.D.M.G. and D.D.C. and his request for assistance and supplies to D.D.M.G. and S.D.M.G. were of a practical nature and done in a timely fashion.
- 116. One small blemish was when our D.O.N. made a request for the supply of some Tetanus and Hep B vaccines and arrangements were made by the D.D.C. to have them collected and transported, an office of Qld Health complained that it had gone through the wrong protocol.
- 117. During the flooding that affected Alpha and Jericho there were no problems with communications, other than a small mobile phone /cradle glitch in the Alpha Police vehicle which was corrected with a telephone call.
- 118. On the 31st December 2010 Theresa CONNELLY, Dept of Communities, arrived in town to evaluate the needs of persons that had been affected by inundation into living areas of their residences, but this was commenced the next day due to the time of day.

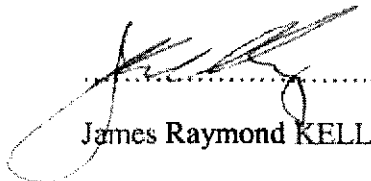

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(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)


 #173601
(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **KELLY, James Raymond**

- 119. On the 1st January 2011 I accompanied DONNELLY to the affected residences and then later assisted with her interviews of affected persons held in the Court House, Alpha. This assistance was greatly appreciated by the persons that accessed the hardship payment.
- 120. The Alpha community response was outstanding in preparing for the flood and recovery.
- 121. Many of the residents had been through the 1990 flood and knew what to expect and knew what to do.
- 122. Once they had completed their own preparation they assisted others in the town.
- 123. On being allowed back to their residences the town people got straight into clean up mode.
- 124. During the recovery phase the rural residents around Alpha attended and were of great assistance in helping clean out under residences and more with the clean up of the business houses.
- 125. The Bureau of Meteorology web site was a great tool used by myself and many other people during the flooding.
- 126. I would like the provision of some more automated reading station along the water courses as some properties that we usually contact were unattended due to it being holiday period.


James Raymond KELLY
SGT 4003505


(Witness's signature)

 #73601
(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

Oaths Act Declaration

OATHS ACT 1867 (DECLARATION)

I ...James Raymond KELLY..... do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 16/03/2011 and contained in pages numbered 1 to 11 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything I know to be false.

and I make this solemn declaration conscientiously believing the same to be true and by virtue of the provisions of the Oaths Act 1867

.....
.....Signature

Taken and declared before me atALPHA.....

this.....17TH.....day ofMARCH.....,2011.

Witness
Justice of the Peace /
Commissioner of Declarations
Other (Please State).....

