



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS

QP0125
01/06
A11

Occurrence #: _____

Statement no.: _____

Date: 14/04/2011

Statement of

Name of witness: MORROW, Gregory Allen

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

Police officer taking statement

Name: _____

Rank: _____

Reg. no.: _____

Region/Command/Division: _____

Station: _____

Statement: _____

ADENDUM TO STATEMENT DATED 07/03/11

Gregory Allen MORROW states:

On the 7th March 2011 I prepared a statement in relation to my involvement in flooding events of January 2011 in the Warwick District in my capacity as the District Disaster Co ordinator.

This amended statement is supplied under a direction by virtue of Section 5(1)(d) of the Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950 (Qld).

During the flood event at Goondiwindi in January 2011 there was a necessity to evacuate both the Goondiwindi Hospital and the Kaloma Aged Care Home at Goondiwindi. On the 13 January 2011 I had discussions with Goondiwindi LDMG Chair Mr Rick KEARNEY in relation to a number of issues but in particular the necessity to evacuate the hospital and Kaloma Aged Care facility. This issue was also raised at State Teleconference which occurred on that morning.

[redacted]
(Witness's signature)

[redacted] J.P. (C'DEC)
(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

[redacted]
(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: MORROW, Gregory Allen

I received an email at 1248 hours on that date from a Mr Alex McGILL Queensland Health Liaison Officer who indicated that he wished to speak to someone in relation to the Aged Care home if the levee bank was breached. I spoke with him and advised him to contact the Goondiwindi LDMG and supplied contacts for that centre.

I further sent an email to the Goondiwindi LDMG and advised them that it would be prudent to have him as party to the planning process for any evacuations which may occur at these facilities. (Copy of emails available)

At about 1315 hrs I contact both Mr McGILL and QAS Acting Area Director Mr Bill HUNTER who was relieving Area Director Andrew McCLEAN on leave. I provided an update of the situation and the prospects that the hospital and Aged Care facility may need to be evacuated.

At about 1400hrs I received information from Mr KEARNEY that the decision has been made to evacuate both medical facilities and plans were being developed for this to occur. I was advised that assistance would be sought. Initial information was that patients would need to go to Inglewood and Texas hospitals. I also was aware that QAS was establishing a mobile hospital unit at Goondiwindi airport.

At about 1530hrs I spoke with Chief Superintendent Alistair DAWSON in relation to the situation at Goondiwindi and advised of the pending evacuation of the hospital and Aged Care facility. At 1614hrs two formal Requests for Assistance was received at the District Disaster Co ordination Centre for assistance in the evacuation of these centres. As a result of receiving these requests I spoke with Penne ROBERTS of Kaloma Aged Care and Katie JEFFORD Director of Nursing Goondiwindi Hospital to ascertain their requirements and plans. At this time the indication was that the hospital had 14 patients to be transported to Inglewood Hospital and Kaloma had 47 patients to be transported with 30 going to Inglewood McIntyre Centre, 1 to another facility at Inglewood, 10 to the Oaks Aged Care Warwick and 6 to Akooramak at Warwick.

[Redacted Signature] (Witness's signature)

[Redacted Signature] Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

[Redacted Signature] (Signature of police officer
preparing statement)


CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: MORROW, Gregory Allen

I contacted Mr Bill HUNTER QAS and advised him of the requirements and he agreed to make all necessary arrangements for the transports to occur. All parties were advised that the Cunningham Highway was open to Warwick however the Main Roads Department was predicting that it would be closed by flood water at Brigalow Creek by 1800hrs on that day.

QAS Bill HUNTER attended the District Co ordinator Centre and commenced the organisation of the transports. I maintained contact with Penne ROBERTS due to the pending road closure and her indication that the Kaloma patients would be transported by road to the east. I did this to ensure the patients would not be stranded by further flood waters. I also maintained contact with Katie JEFFORD regarding the hospital patients. Throughout the process there were mixed reports as to the numbers requiring transport and the methods this was to occur. I later was advised by HUNTER that aircraft had been organised for the air transport of some Kaloma and hospital patients that could not be transported by road. Although there was confusion I was confident at this time that all patients were well cared for and transported to safety.

On the morning of 14 January 2011 I received information from Katie JEFFORD that there were 4 Kaloma patients still at the Goondiwindi Airport in the QAS mobile hospital awaiting transport. She subsequently through the LDMG forwarded a further request for assistance. I again contacted Bill HUNTER QAS and was advised that an aircraft that was being used for the transport the previous night was diverted to an emergency and did not complete the transport. He arranged for the 4 patients to be taken to Inglewood.

Although all patients were safe and not put in any further danger I believe that both the hospital and aged care facility need to identify clear early trigger points of predicted river heights to ensure sufficient time for evacuations to occur. They also need to review their evacuation plans to ensure that each facility has clear direction as to where patients should be transported to and appropriate arrangements in place.

 *J.P. (C1Dec)*

(Witness's signature) (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations's signature) (Signature of police officer preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: MORROW, Gregory Allen

On the 16 January 2011 at about 1050hrs a request for the return of patients to both the hospital and aged care home was received at the District Disaster Co ordination Centre. As a result QAS Area Director Andrew McLEAN was contacted and he advised he could make the necessary arrangements. Patients were returned over the next few days by road using QAS vehicles and the Kaloma bus.

The hospital had a three stage plan for being reopened with Stage 1 return of acute and aged care patients, Stage 2 open emergency department and accepting admissions and then Stage 3 close the mobile hospital at the airport. The return of all patients although slow appeared to be organised and well managed.

On the morning of 12 January 2011 I received instructions from Deputy Commissioner Ian STEWART of the SDCC to find out what an 11.5 metre peak at Goondiwindi would mean in relation to flooding and the levee bank. I subsequently contacted MR KEARNEY and spoke to him in relation to this issue and he agreed to make further inquiries and to advise me in due course. At 1052hrs on that day I received an email from Mr Jason QUINNELL of the Goondiwindi LDMG and a documented reply in relation to the request for information. (Copy of email available)

This email highlighted that at 11.5 metres at Goondiwindi on the McIntyre River would see the levee bank overtopped by up to half a metre and water inundating the majority of the town. Many properties would see over a metre of water through houses. The only area remaining above water level is a small sand ridge through the centre of town. The 11.5 metre flood is beyond the modelling of the Council with all modelling stopped at 10.85 metres which was the 1976 flood level. The council therefore suggested that at an 11.5 metre flood the evacuation centre would not be viable and the town would need to be evacuated. Council also indicated that they would need some 36 hours warning of the flood to initiate evacuation plans.

[Redacted signature] (Witness's signature)

J.P. (C.D.C.)
[Redacted signature] (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

[Redacted signature] (Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: MORROW, Gregory Allen

At the 0800hrs on 13 January 2011 state teleconference issues surrounding the predicted flood height and the levee banks were raised and as a result I contacted Mr KEARNEY of the Goondiwindi LDMG and was advised that the levee banks have been regularly inspected and maintained since 1996, it had been raised by .5metre and extended to the west of the township. There was machinery, trucks, dozers and soil on site to combat any breaches. At that time council had 6000 sandbags filled and available as well as a further 100,000 sandbags readily available. The predicted peak at that time was 10.75 metres. There was no new infrastructure since 1996 that would have affected the levee bank.

The levee bank on the southern or New South Wales side of the river was lower than on the town side and the water will spread in a southern direction. At a 10.7 metre height water would not be in the township however some water inundation on the western side could be expected in house yards only. New housing estates in the western area have had to be built on raised house pads to comply with Council legislation. Any small breaches of the levee could be managed locally. Severe breaches of the levee would still allow several hours for evacuation of persons. At this time there were 2 council employees maintaining a constant watch over the levee banks. KEARNEY further advised for the river height to go above 10.7 metres and reach the 11 metre mark twice the water volume would be needed in the river for this to occur. This was not predicted.

At the 1700hrs State teleconference which I attended along with Graham SHEU (Goondiwindi Mayor) Rick KEARNEY (Chair Goondiwindi LDMG) and Peter STEWART (Council CEO) Deputy Commissioner STEWART asked numerous questions in relation to Goondiwindi evacuation planning and trigger points. Clear responses were not given by the members present from the Goondiwindi LDMG and Deputy Commissioner STEWART convened a separate teleconference which included the three Goondiwindi members, the Deputy and myself. He gave clear directions to all that he wanted a concise evacuation plan quickly developed with trigger points for the evacuation of the Goondiwindi township. He gave us a short period of time to consider his directions and to develop a suitable plan.

[Redacted] (Witness's signature)

[Redacted] J.T. (C' Dec.)
(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

[Redacted] (Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: MORROW, Gregory Allen


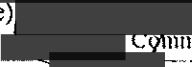
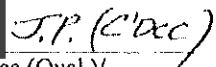
He then left the teleconference and I gave instructions and guidance as to the development of this required plan to those from the Goondiwindi LDMG. I then left the teleconference to allow the LDMG to consider my advice and to formulate the plan. I then telephone the Deputy and explained what I had done and a short time later a further teleconference was held with the same parties and the Goondiwindi plan that was developed was further discussed and adopted.

At 1958 hrs on that date I received an email from Inspector Richard HAHN with a documented plan as was previously discussed and he telephoned me and advised that the plan needed to be formally adopted by the Goondiwindi LDMG. I subsequently at 2001hrs emailed the document to the Goondiwindi LDMG and at 2010hrs I received an email from KEARNEY formally adopting the plan. (Email copy available). Brisbane was advised of the adoption.

As a result of this issue and then necessity for the Deputy to intervene in this process I instigated hourly Sitreps from Goondiwindi LDMG to me and I subsequently forwarded them to the SDCC for their information. These Sitreps were in addition to the daily ones provided. 18 such Sitreps were provided and concluded with the last one 0800hrs on the 15 January 2011. (18 x Sitreps available) During this time I had telephone contact with Inspectors WHEATLEY and MABBUTT of the SDCC in relation to these Sitreps and the updated situation at Goondiwindi.

At the time I believe that the Mayor Mr SHEU was confident in the integrity of the levee bank, he had a sound knowledge of previous flooding events of the river and he knew that the levee bank was higher on the Queensland side of the river forcing excess water to the south. The Mayor and others were open to my directions and advice in relation to the formulation of the evacuation plan and showed no resistance to the need for its urgent development.

During this event there was no loss of life or serious injury to any persons. Although there were issues identified in relation to evacuation plans and processes the Goondiwindi LDMG as well as their member agencies are currently active in reviewing and implementing new improved strategies.


(Witness's signature)  (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)  (Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: MORROW, Gregory Allen

The information contained in this statement is provided on the basis of the knowledge, information and material currently available to me and my interpretation of the information sought by the requirement at this point in time.

[Redacted]
[Redacted] G A MORROW
[Redacted] Inspector

Oaths Act Declaration

OATHS ACT 1867 (DECLARATION)

I Gregory Allen MORROW do solemnly and sincerely declare that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 14/4/11 and contained in pages numbered 1 to 7 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

[Redacted] Signature

Taken and declared before me at Warwick

This 14th day of April 2011

Witness [Redacted] J.P. (C' Dec.)
[Redacted] Justice of the Peace /
[Redacted] Commissioner of Declarations
Other (Please State)