

## Submission to Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

This submission relates to the Surat region for the December/January 2010-11 floods

### **The response to the 2010/2011 flood events.**

The initial response to the Dec/Jan flood events was, I would say comforting, with telephone calls mostly daily to check on the well being of people likely to be affected by the flood waters. However as soon as the first flood peaked at Surat those calls ceased. This showed a complete lack of understanding by those in control of the Emergency Services of the ongoing effects of flooding downstream.

There appeared an unwillingness of the Emergency Service personnel to listen to the previous experience of older residents in the community when making decisions. Particularly in the rural situations, much of the assistance was left to the individuals to organise with assistance from other residents with equipment suitable for the task. The amount of SES personnel in the area seemed to be overkill, when one considers the threat to Surat town of the flood events and the lack or inability to provide assistance to rural properties. Because of other disaster events within the State the Second major peak in the River went unnoticed. This just further compounded problems being faced by the community and rural properties, restricting movement and gaining supplies.

### **Adequacy of forecasts and early warning systems**

There were in my, and a lot of older long term residents opinion, a lot of assumptions being floated around as to the likely impacts if the River should reach certain heights on the town of Surat. These assumptions caused great anxiety within the older residents, as well as being pipe dreams for Surat.

There was a complete lack of information on the likely impacts on rural properties. Particularly downstream in relation to the Barrackdale choke which flooded country at levels above anything known in the last 100 years.

The lack of regular reporting and dissemination of the information of River heights in flooding at the record heights, when compared to previous floods of this magnitude ie:- 1942, 1956, 1970's, 1083, 1996. was a problem in assisting landholders assessing the likely impacts on properties in the flood plane with some advance notice. By the time the severity of the flood was appreciated the opportunity to take appropriate measures was lost.

I believe the authorities need to make more use of historical data, longer than it appears 10 years. There are some valuable lessons for those in control of the situations to be more fully aware of these previous events when making decisions.

### **Implementation of systems operation plans for dams**

Some suggestions to hopefully help in gaining more input to the inflows to the River system in this region, would be to have all manual reporting sites converted to automated so the information is updated regularly, and accessible by the public, as it seems the only way to keep a close eye on the river heights and inflows is via the internet. Previously this information was regularly broadcast on rural radio programs, however unless it is a major town or headlines this service it appears has been either, with- drawn or discontinued.

This poses problems to those who do not have/or have access to internet, or if as happens in floods or extreme conditions these options are lost. Also whilst media concentrate on towns, rural areas are mostly forgotten.

I would suggest that two extra monitoring sites be installed to help with assessing the inflows to the Balonne River system. One on the Muckadilla Creek somewhere south of the Muckadilla township and one on the junction of the Bungil Creek with the Bungeworgorai Creek.

There also needs to be more investigation as to the effect Beardmore Dam could have on the flow through the Barrackdale choke. This could be as part of the call for a Dam at this site as a further flood mitigation measure for StGeorge.

An area of concern to some landholders is the construction of infrastructure on the flood plains in the form of Ring tanks and Levee banks. This has the effect of diverting water to areas previously out of flood height and to heights not expected or previously experienced.

I personally didn't have any household or personal effects loss, however our Rural property was submerged, with up to 6,000 acres being underwater, with more than 3,000 acres being submerged for almost four weeks. We suffered stock losses, particularly sheep, through the inability to provide adequate health measures during and after the events, in being able to access them to provide this assistance, as well as some kilometres of lost fencing.

Thank you for the opportunity to contribute to this inquiry.

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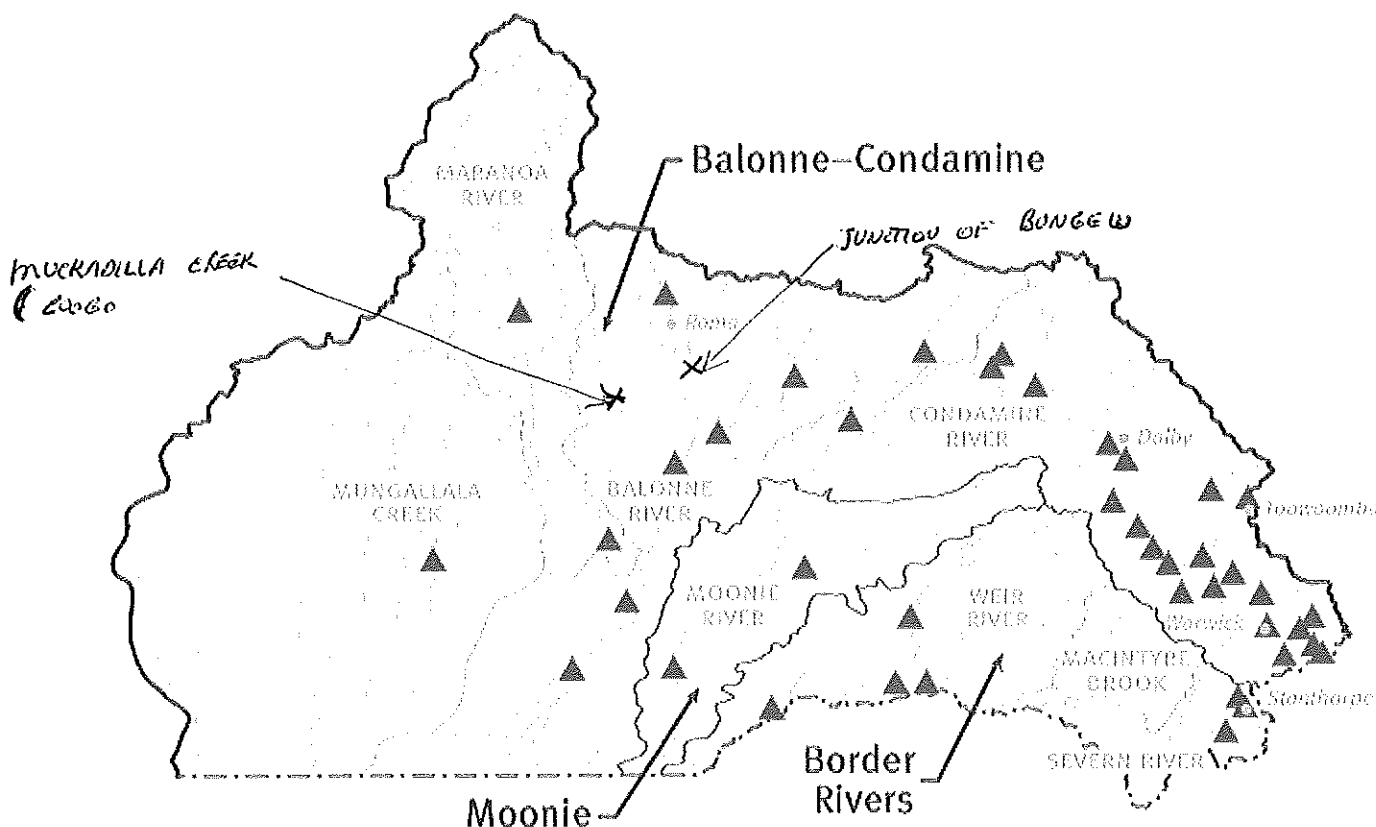


## Environment and Resource Management

Home → Topics → Water → Monitoring and assessment → Streamflow monitoring  
→ Water streamflow data

### Region map for the Balonne-Condamine, Border Rivers, Moonie areas

Select the relevant monitoring site from the map or from the list of active monitoring sites.



#### Active monitoring sites

- [Callandoon Creek @ Carana Weir \(416203A\)](#)
- [Weir River @ Gunn Bridge \(416204A\)](#)
- [Weir River @ Jericho \(416205A\)](#)
- [Callandoon Creek @ Oonavale \(416206A\)](#)
- [Broadwater Creek @ Dam Site \(416317A\)](#)
- [Severn River @ Ballandean \(416318A\)](#)
- [Quart Pot Creek @ Stanthorpe \(416319A\)](#)
- [Moonie River @ Nindigully \(417201B\)](#)
- [Moonie river @ Flinton \(417205A\)](#)
- [Balonne River @ St. George \(422201E\)](#)
- [Dogwood Creek @ Gilweir \(422202B\)](#)

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