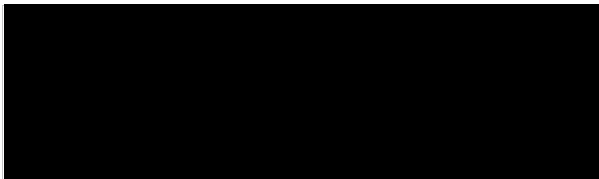


12 February, 2011



Dear Commissioner,

I refer your advertisement Courier Mail Page 43 Saturday February 12th 2011.

Preamble:-

I particularly wish to address items 1, 3, 5, 7,

- i.e.
- 1/. Preparation
  - 3/. Informing
  - 5/. Early warning systems
  - 7/. Land use planning

Qualification:- Australian Citizen, Served in Vietnam, born Kogarah N S W 22/4/1945, Lived in Qld; since 1975, Real Estate Agent for 27 years, drink water, swim in it, shower in it, hose with it, mix it with scotch, and I know it does not run up hill.

**1/. Preparation. ( Better than the Cure ) and 5/. Early warning systems**

In 1991 Dayboro, the catchment area of the North Pine Dam flooded. Compared to the recent floods it was only minor in comparison. The newly constructed bridge spanning Terrors Creek went under water between 4 and 6 inches.

This was in spite of the fact it was supposedly raised by eight inches above the highest historically known flood of the time. The local municipal pool was completely inundated with flood water and much of the commercial properties along the main street were effected by flooding. A serious event but nothing compared to 2010.

At the time the catchment area had received about 8 inches of rain in a period of 8 to 10 hours and the water was rising fast and my office bordered Terrors Creek.

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I rang an acquaintance of mine, whom I knew worked at the North Pine Dam as a water quality controller, and advise him to tell his superiors that if they do not open the dam gates soon they would lose the whole of Dayboro.

I then left Dayboro and headed for home at Strathpine.

When I got to Petrie the old low bridge was already inundated with water with about 4 inches. A Police Officer was directing traffic away from the bridge but because I had a four wheel drive he allowed me through. They subsequently built an additional higher bridge that was also rendered impassable during the recent flood.

The current flooding had an aura of here we go again.

I left Dayboro the 7<sup>th</sup> of January the Saturday before the flood struck. (Retired ) needless to say my friend at the North Pine Dam had also retired. My point is what measures had been put in place since the 1991 flood. Given that staff turnover and new inexperienced ones take over the older ones places.

A close simple analogy of a water catchment area is not unlike a bath tub in that it has an inlet the catchment area and an outlet the plug or control valve, with a holding vessel in between.

A bit like a computer program i.e. data in data out.

In more refined terms the vessel needs to store water at a predetermine optimal level. E.g. 25mm (1 inch) "x" mega litres of rain in, over and above the optimal level, means the release of 25mm (1 inch ) "x" mega litres of rain out.

In the event of 200mm (8 inches) 8x mega litres falling over 6 to eight hours ( reasonably normal expectation) by the eighth inch 7 inches should have already passed through the outlet. Close monitoring of falls in the catchment area is crucial in determining the outflow minus a usage factor

Historical recording would determine the likelihood of more rain falling within a shorter time thereby restricting the out flow of water accordingly. Thereby avoiding flooding.

Other factors such as how much rain the area has already endured and what is the likely speed of the run off factor.

On the outlet side the rate of outflow is commensurate with the outflows capacity/ability to discharge through creeks and rivers without causing flooding or damage. Tide movements will play a big part in the optimum level of discharge over time.

Electronic capacitors both on the inlet side and the outlet side should be installed to aid the watergate controllers as to when and how much water should be saved or discharged. Regular maintenance and testing of these apparatuses should be mandatory between and during flood events.

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The simple device could consist of a float buoy engaging an electrode that sends a wireless signal to the controller. And the power source made up of solar cells and backup batteries

### **3/. Informing the Community**

My main observation of informing the community was that it came in a mixed message format. i.e. "Panic... but keep calm". In first aid we learnt that shock in itself can kill. I once had a job as a security, fire and first aid officer. Whilst on duty a car load of workers came screeching to a halt at my security office. My initial reaction was that the sky must be falling in. When I found the cause of their agitation I learned that one of them had been bitten by a red back spider. I asked did any body catch the spider to determine its sex as only one of the species in time will poison you. They said no but they had killed the spider.

However, I explained to the group that if you did not calm down and slow down you may very well finish up dead as a road fatality. Meanwhile I told one of the group to go back and find the alleged red back as we needed to determine if it was poisonous. The others I told to present themselves to the local hospital but to slow down and drive carefully that in the event the bitten had endured the wrath of the poisonous variety they still had 48 hours to go.

Needless to say the spider searcher returned with a dead wasp. This removed the one bitten out of the woods. Panic could have killed the lot of them for the sake of a wasp bite.

Mass mania and shock are a deadly combination. Especially with older citizens, and Children in a crisis situation.

### **7/. Land use planning.**

Brisbane was chosen as a sight for a provincial city back in the earlier days of settlement. When the Populus relied heavily on ships for transport interstate, intrastate and over seas. Of course this reliance is not so important today.

We instead rely on the dwindling resource of space to build our homes and live close to facilities and conveniences even if this places us in jeopardy of periodic floods.

A person whom I know used to live at Dutton Park during the 1974 floods. After that tragic experience of losing all their belongings and enthusiasm for their home they sold up and moved on. Time also marched on. Memories of the flood devastation waft into oblivion and 36 years later new owners would become the new victims.

Topics for discussion would entail Building a new city elsewhere, rezoning the land to flood plain not for habitation (which would not impress the current owners and their precious asset), plus Authorities resume the flood effected houses ( minus any exempted from the new water mitigation scheme), and pay them current market value set with some predetermined criterion, Demand that all houses be elevated on stumps above the 6 metre flood level or establish floating pontoons such as the old gas tanks. This would of cause irk the neighbours that bought their properties because of the river view. Whichever way you choose you will be dammed if you do and dammed if you don't.

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In my opinion to walk a thousand miles begins but with a single step. The answer as I see it lies within the new buss word, "Generational Change" I.e. slowly over time any area below the 6 metre high water mark be resumed for public space such as recreation sport, picnic areas, and even dredged for safe secured house boat and general marine mooring, with any proposed buildings such as club houses be built on adjacent land above the high water mark.

Undoubtedly this project would take time but would add more lungs to the busy city keep the tree huggers happy and alleviate the devastation of flood induced life and property. In one hundred years time our ancestors will wonder what all the fuss was about.

Compiled by Dennis Sharkey.

