

<i>Name of Witness</i>	Colleen Florence ENGEL
<i>Date of Birth</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Address and contact details</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Occupation</i>	School Principal
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Detective Sergeant Glen CATCHPOLE
<i>Date taken</i>	20/04/2011

I, Colleen Florence ENGEL states:

1. I am [REDACTED] years of age and reside at [REDACTED]. I have lived at this address for about 12 years. For most of the time since 1992 I have been the Principal at the Redbank State Primary School located on 9 Brisbane Road, Redbank. I am presently on pre-retirement leave which I commenced on Monday 31st January 2011.
2. When I first became Principal of the school, I was made aware that the school was used from time to time for disaster relief purposes for the local community if needed. There was no active committee in all my time there to organise this. The school does have a Disaster Plan in place to respond to any emergency involving the students and staff of the school. Up until 1998, I lived on site at the school, and from time to time the facilities were used in times of emergency such as hail storms. I was able to provide assistance as I lived on site.
3. The school is on a separate circuit from most of the surrounding community and so would not loose power when much of the rest of the community would.

Witness Signature.
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Signature of officer

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4. The school has tuckshop facilities able to be used for cooking and preparing food. The tuckshop facilities also include fridges and deep freezers.
5. The school P & C would discuss any matters relative to provision of disaster assistance if needed. In years past, one of the long standing Presidents of the P & C had also been involved in the Lions. I had been involved in Rotary and the local Q.A.T.B committee. Over time, the school's involvement lessened as people moved on. My role also reduced after I returned from positions elsewhere in the State and I did not rejoin those committees.
6. With the Building the Education Revolution Project, Redbank School was fitted with a Resource Centre which included a full sized kitchen which was to be used to teach the children to cook. The kitchen facility had never been used by the time of the recent flood event, and the new library had no furniture. This made it well suited for providing emergency accommodation.
7. In previous events where the school had been used for emergency provision, I had lived on site and so had been immediately aware of the situation. Since I moved off the site when the Principal's residence had been removed, the school had not again been used for emergency events.
8. I recall during the week of the floods, in January, some tradesmen who were going to do some maintenance at the school contacted me and told me that they had heard the school was being used as an evacuation centre, and was it still alright to do the work? I was completely unaware of this.

9. I immediately attended the school and saw that the facilities in the new building were being used. I found out later that access to the school had been organised by two community members through the school groundsman. At the time they had been catering for about one hundred people, and about fifty to sixty people were sleeping at the facility, including children.
10. Many people who were cleaning up in the community and had no power or access to food or showers, or dry bed were coming to us.
11. Most of the surrounding community were very generous in providing things that we needed. These included bedding, toiletries, clothing and food. The school was able to use school facilities like 'Prep' mattresses, toys, photo copying for the forms for relief funding and telephones.
12. We had no medical facilities, but were able to use the school's first aid kits. I did notice that a couple of the residents were suffering from mental health issues, and we really weren't equipped to cope with this.
13. The school remained open for a further four days. On the Sunday afternoon the Red Cross arrived. They were shocked because they did not know that we were operating. They arranged for support for anyone who still had issues. They arranged for transport for anyone still at the school to go to the Ipswich relief centre at the Ipswich showgrounds the next day so that we could close down.
14. I slept at the school for the four days. I had to leave the school on the Monday morning to go and deal with the death of my brother. By the time I returned that afternoon, no one was left at the school.

15. I thought that this response was an excellent community response that happened without prior planning. Most people's needs were met and they felt very supported. It was arranged in the beginning by Tracey Bradley who works for Joanne MILLER, MLA and Maxine (not sure of her last name) who both live locally, close to the school. Together with the groundsman, Rocco VIVAROO (who also lives close to the school), they were very well connected to arrange everything that was needed in the beginning.

16. I know that Maxine kept a record of everyone who came to the centre. I don't know what happened to those records.

17. I am concerned that if these people had not been around, and in the absence of a formal committee to plan the response, much of what was provided would have been impossible. Further there was no resource of information to refer to as needs arose. We didn't know to contact the Red Cross. We didn't have the skills to deal with mental health issues. We didn't know what other assistance was available.

18. Many of the organisers had traumas of their own to deal with, and this potentially affected the joint capacity to deal with the issues as they arose. A pre-planned response would assist greatly under these circumstances.

19. When I returned late on the Monday afternoon, the school was left in a clean and tidy state, and nothing further was required to be done in preparation for the start of the school year. The costs of anything that the school provided was born out of school funds, and the school was happy to do this given the wonderful community support the school normally receives.

20. Because I am now on pre-retirement leave, I am unable to say what part the school has now played in the recovery after the flood.

21. To my knowledge, the school did not receive any local government assistance to help with the flood response.

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Colleen Florence ENGEL

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 20th April 2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 5 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 that I know is false.

.....Signature

Signed at Annerley this 20th day of April 2011.

Witness Signature..... Signature of officer
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