

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Prepared by: Legal Services Unit

Date: 23/03/2011

Name of Witness: David Andrew Fraser

Address of Witness: Level 2 128 Margaret Street Toowoomba Queensland

Occupation: Public Servant

Position: Area Director, Eastern, South Western Region
(Emergency Management Queensland)

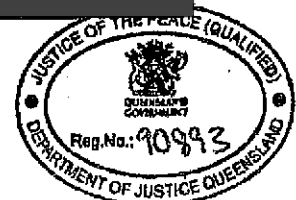
I, David Fraser and Area Director, Eastern, South Western Region (Emergency Management Queensland) for the Department of Community Safety state:

1. I have worked for Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) since 2005. I started as a Training Coordinator, then moved to Regional Training and Equipment Coordinator and in 2009 was appointed as Area Director – Eastern Region. A Position Description for my role is attached to this statement and marked DF – 1.
2. I have been a member of the State Emergency Service (SES) since joining in Rockhampton on 10 December 1991. I have completed a number of operational competencies and I am undertaking a Diploma of Management.
3. Attached to this statement and marked DF-2 is a list of those competencies.
4. I also hold several competencies in disaster management including:
 - i) *Coordinate resources within a multi agency emergency response;*
 - ii) *Manage media requirements at major incident;*
 - iii) *Design and manage activities which exercise elements of emergency management;*
 - iv) *Introduction to Queensland disaster management arrangements induction;*
 - v) *Local Disaster Coordinator Training;*
 - vi) *TAA40104 – Cert IV in training and assessment; and*
 - vii) *Cert III Business.*

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Preparations for flooding events

5. The actions that I undertook in preparation for the 2010/2011 storm season included: Training local government staff, conducting exercises, providing advice and assistance in the planning process, development of Local Disaster Management (LDM) plans and sub-plans and providing assistance in developing standard operating procedures in support of disaster management guidelines and the *Disaster Management Act 2003*.
6. The planning activities are guided by an 'all hazards' approach, to adequately prepare the Toowoomba area for all types of disaster which may occur. This is an ongoing process which occurs throughout the year.
7. An example of some of the activities undertaken in 2010 are:
 - Exercise Orko November 2010
 - Exercise Hamish June 2010, flood exercise Southern Downs Regional Council
 - LDM Group (LDMG) meetings Toowoomba 4/3/10, 19/8/10, 11/11/10
 - LDMG meetings Southern Downs 3/3/10, 21/6/10, 16/9/10
 - LDMG meeting Lockyer Valley 6/8/10, 23/9/10
 - Exercise Erebus, Operational exercise, QPS, QPRS, QAS, Local Government
 - Exercise Ember, Toowoomba Regional Council Fire scenario
 - Aged care meeting at Nu Mylo and Highfields, re evacuation of Nursing Homes during disasters and Emergencies and Planning requirements under Federal Legislation and how that relates to Qld Disaster Management system
 - Member of National Disaster Management Plan (NDMP) Flood study group Warwick
 - Member of NDMP Flood study group Lockyer Valley
 - Joint emergency services training course (HAZMAT Chemical, Biological and Radiological) conducted by QFRS.
 - EMQ course and exercise (Coordinate Resources in a multi-agency incident) – Lecturer for part of course and conducted an exercise. – Earthquake scenario affecting hypothetical city of Yackam (Mackay).
 - Request for assistance courses - SES
 - Introduction to Queensland Disaster Management Arrangements Induction – EMQ to Red Cross, Department of Environment and Resource Management (DERM), Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)
 - Disaster Management Awareness training to schools and community groups.
 - Disaster Management changes presentations to Toowoomba and Warwick District Disaster Management Group (DDMG)
 - Community recovery centre exercise with Toowoomba Regional Council and Department of Communities (establishment of an evacuation centre and 'one stop shop').
 - Emergency alert presentation Warwick DDMG.
 - Review and comments on state recovery plan, discussion with 2 district recovery groups
 - Attend district community recovery meetings
 - Local Disaster Coordinator, Train the Trainer Course Brisbane
 - Local Disaster Coordinator, Train staff to deliver package to Local Governments
 - Changes to Disaster Management System presentation Aug 2010
 - DERM EPA Incident Management Training
 - Department of Transport training with SES executives, SES Executive conference
 - Toowoomba SES Executive conference – DMA Training conducted, Preseason awareness and Presentation
 - SES Volunteers Trainers conference
 - Tri state Disaster Management Conference
 - Toowoomba Regional Council Evacuation and Welfare committee meetings

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- Orko Debrief Southern Downs, Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba debrief conducted as part of a LDMG meeting
- Disaster management training Toowoomba Regional Council District Managers
- Brisbane flood workshop (15 Dec 2010) Pre Season Brisbane River Catchment workshop
- St George QTCCC Workshop hosted by EMQ and BOM
- Ambulance Special Operations Response Team Field Hospital workshop Toowoomba Show grounds
- Disasters managers workshop 1 Day workshop with Southern Downs, Goondiwindi, Lockyer Valley Staff – conducted (19 October 2010)
- Community meeting Millmerran SES recruitment info evening
- Guardian information and awareness session Dalby
- Regional response capability assessments



These activities do not include any phone calls or emails to respective Local Governments, Government agencies, non-Government agencies which are normal business as required by my position.

8. I am also responsible for advising local governments of their requirement to comply with The *Disaster Management Act 2003* ("the DMA"), in particular section 4B of the DMA which requires management of disasters in accordance with the State Disaster Management Plan, Strategic Policy Framework and any disaster management guidelines.
9. I was also responsible for the development and facilitation of exercises Hamish and I co wrote and facilitated exercise Orko.

Response to Flooding Events

10. For the period 18 – 26 December 2010 I was on annual leave. On the 27th December I was recalled to work by the Regional Director, Bob Bundy due to the rainfall event on the 25 and 26 December 2010.
11. I was called upon to provide liaison support between the SES, EMQ and local government and I was also called upon to assist in actioning kit referrals.
12. Kit referrals occur when a member of the public rings the 132500 national SES number. These calls are answered by Smart Services Queensland (SSQ) for our region and the operator sends an email to the Regional Duty Officer "RDO" advising of the particular details of the request for assistance. The RDO is then responsible for on-forwarding each job to the appropriate SES group. During this time multiple staff were involved in the administrative process due to the significant number of calls received.
13. I also provided advice and assistance to Southern Downs Regional Council, Toowoomba Regional Council and Lockyer Valley Regional Council on a range of issues including disaster management enquiries, weather reports, SES tasking, Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements and disaster stores resourcing.
14. From 29 December ²⁰¹⁰ 2011 to 30 December ²⁰¹⁰ 2011, I worked with the Southern Downs Regional Council and the LDMG on the implementation of their recovery plan.
15. From 31 December ²⁰¹⁰ 2011 to 2 January ²⁰¹¹ 2012 I was deployed to the Western Downs Regional Council to relieve the Area Director – Central for a period of two weeks. During this period I was involved in liaising with the LDMG and the DDMG. During this period, I also provided advice, support and assistance to all SES groups in the Toowoomba area and provided advice and assistance to Goondiwindi Regional Council, Western Downs Regional Council, Southern Downs Regional Council, Toowoomba Regional Council and Lockyer Valley Regional Council as required by phone or email.

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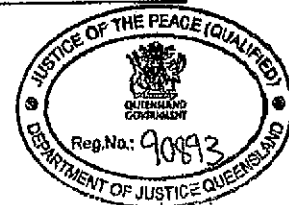
16. One of the main issues that I addressed during the period 31 December to 2nd January at Western Downs Regional Council was the aerial resupply operations to isolated rural properties. In accordance with the resupply policy, I negotiated with the DDC and the LDMG to streamline the administrative process to enable the effective and efficient use of helicopters to provide these resupply operations.
17. From 4 January 2011 until 6 January 2011, I returned to the Toowoomba Regional Office where I resumed my duties of providing advice and assistance to Toowoomba, Southern Downs and Lockyer Valley LDMGs. I also continued to liaise with SES groups regarding kit referrals, tasking and resourcing.
18. Lockyer Valley Local Disaster Co-ordination Centre ("LDCC") was operational as at 6 January 2011 due to storm activity and was operational for a period of 2 days.
19. On 9 January 2011, I was assisting in the management of kit referrals and liaising with SES groups from home due to ongoing monsoonal weather events.
20. On 10 January I commenced work at approximately 8am and received notification of a scheduled LDMG meeting at Toowoomba Regional Council to be held at 1pm in the HR training room.
21. This meeting was in response to the flooding and resupply operations being undertaken by Toowoomba Regional Council and to consider whether the LDMG should activate in response to the substantial rainfall recorded across a very large geographical area during the two weeks leading up to 10 January 2011.
22. During the LDMG, Toowoomba Regional Council staff advised of the operations that had been ongoing using Council resources and the SES, particularly in the Clifton, Cambooya, Pittsworth, Brookstead, Millmerran and Cecil Plains Areas. A request from QHEALTH for the LDMG to assist in resupplying regional hospitals due to roads being flooded was considered. Discussions continued for a period of time on the need for the Toowoomba LDMG to activate.
23. During the meeting between 1pm and 2pm significant rain fell. At approximately 2:15pm, whilst the meeting was discussing the need to activate the LDMG, members of Toowoomba Regional Council received reports of flash flooding within the Toowoomba CBD and land slips on both the Toowoomba Range and the New England Highway at Mount Kynoch. The LDMG activated with all members instructed to reconvene at 4pm that afternoon to activate the LDCC.
24. Between 2.15pm and 4pm I remained at Toowoomba Regional Council (in the HR training room) with QFRS representative Michael Patch and noted heavy rain continuing to fall.
25. Toowoomba Regional Council staff arrived between 4pm and 5pm to commence duties in the coordination centre. Some resources were set up in the coordination centre but additional work was required to rearrange and reorganise the room to make it operational. The disaster phone-number was transferred to the call-centre and I provided details to Toowoomba Regional Council communications staff on the diversion at approximately 6pm.
26. I believe it was approximately 8pm when I left the LDCC to return to the regional office for debriefing on all events that had occurred that day and I concluded work at 10pm.
27. On 11 January 2011, I commenced work at approximately 8am after my mandatory 10 hour break and I proceeded directly to the LDCC where I stayed until approximately mid-afternoon. Thereafter I returned to the Toowoomba Regional Office to touch base with the Lockyer Valley and Southern Downs Regional Councils and SES groups. I concluded work at 8:30pm that night.

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28. From 12 January 2011 to 15 January I continued this routine of visiting the LDCC in the mornings and returning to the regional office later in the day to liaise with other councils and SES groups.
29. On Sunday 16 January 2011, I commenced work at the Regional Office for a period of three hours, continuing with kit referrals and the management of SES operations across my area.
30. On 17 January 2011 I was deployed to Lockyer Valley Regional Council, to assist the Council in disaster operations by providing advice and assistance to the Mayor, CEO and the LDMG. This continued for a period of approximately four weeks.
31. During my deployment to Lockyer Valley Regional Council I provided advice and assistance to the ongoing response activities, primarily in the Grantham, Helidon and Murphy's Creek areas. I also provided advice in relation to the implementation and ongoing management of their recovery plan and recovery committees.

Deployment of Personnel

32. In my position as Area-Director Eastern, I have no staff reporting directly to me and I was not involved in deploying staff across the region.
33. Members of SES groups are volunteers appointed under the DMA and are not personnel that are under my command or control.
34. During the operational period of the flooding event (i.e. 10 – 14 January 2011) there were very few movements or deployments of SES as they concentrated their efforts on their local areas. I did however liaise with the Local Controllers from relevant local government areas regarding tasking of jobs and resourcing requirements.
35. The major deployments of SES personnel (e.g. searches for missing persons in Grantham and recovery and clean-up efforts in Dalby) were managed by the Regional Director (Robert Bundy).

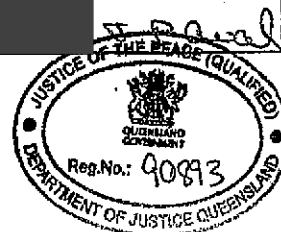
Use of Weather Data

36. EMQ uses weather warnings in a series of ways. QTCCC Workshops were held at Charleville on 7 September 2010 and St George on 9 September 2010. Weather information is also provided at LDMG meetings (generally) and was provided at the SES Executive conference on 23/10/2010.
37. I also receive weather and storm warnings by email and the EMQ Southwest Regional Office receives all weather and flood warnings from the South West region by facsimile from the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM). From 1 December 2010 to date, we received hundreds of flood-warnings and severe weather warnings which is typical of this time of year. Severe thunderstorm warnings are generally received on a daily basis throughout the storm season as the Southwest Region is a very large geographical area and covers approximately 23% of the State.
38. I use a combination of sources for weather data including the BOM, Elders Weather Service and Weather Zone during operational activities.
39. I also use the daily Queensland Emergency Management Reports as a source of weather data as they provide a weather forecast for a four day period.

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40. In some circumstances the BOM will telephone the SDCC directly to advise of a significant or severe weather event and in these instances notification is sent through RDO's. Depending on the nature and timing of the notification, SES executives may receive an SMS message of the weather warning and areas to be affected.

Communication between me and the DDMG, SDMG, SDCC and/or State Disaster Coordinator

41. In my role as Area Director - Eastern (EMQ) and in the role of executive officer to the DDMG, I constantly communicated with the DDC and members of the DDMG about a range of topics including prevention, preparation, response and recovery. This communication occurred as required by operational planning or operational needs.
42. Legislation changes occurred on 1 November 2010 designating the role of executive officer of the DDMG to the Queensland Police Service.
43. From the 1 November the focus of Area Directors changed to providing support, advice and assistance to Local Governments and LDMG's. I am still a member of the DDMG and receive Agenda's and minutes of meetings. During this event I did not attend DDMG meetings as my focus was Local Government and LDMG operations.
44. I do not communicate directly with the State Disaster Management Group ("SDMG"), State Disaster Coordination Committee ("SDCC") and/or the State Disaster Coordinator ("SDC"). Any communication that is required to this level is communicated via the Local Disaster Coordinator ("LDC") and/or the DDC.
45. The only exception to this was that I did attend several SDCC daily teleconferences with other EMQ staff to receive information from the BOM and SDMG.

Involvement with State Agencies

46. In my role as Area Director (Eastern) EMQ, I frequently communicate with key staff from the *Department of Communities, Department of Infrastructure and Planning, Department of Transport, Queensland Police Service, Queensland Fire and Rescue, Queensland Ambulance Service* and other departments as required.
47. I liaise with those Agencies in relation to their role(s) and functions in the Disaster Management Framework. Such communications can occur regarding operational matters in any of the four phases of disaster management (prevention, preparation, response and recovery).

Involvement with Commonwealth Agencies

48. The only contact that I have had with Commonwealth Agencies is through the LDMG or the DDMG. Agencies such as Centrelink, BOM or the Department of Defense have direct involvement during disaster operations as required and this communication is coordinated through the chair of the LDMG and/or the DDC.

Equipment and Communications

49. During the flooding operations from 27 December 2010 through to now, the Regional Director continued to manage the business of EMQ (Southwest Region) and provided assistance to his staff in relation to fatigue management, tasking and deployments. This enabled on-ground staff to continue with their operational duties.

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50. As part of our communications strategy, on-ground operational staff are provided with laptops, air-cards and mobile phones and have access to deployment kits (their 'office in a box') which enables staff to be deployed anywhere in the region and have ongoing communications with LDMGs, DDMGs, EMQ and other agencies as required.
51. As part of our pre-season preparation we ensured that these resources were operational and available for use and this also included the Southwest Region 'Free to Move' kit which was not needed by EMQ staff during this operation.
52. In pre-season preparations, operational staff received training in the use of Emergency Alert to assist LDMGs and DDMGs provide emergent messages to members of the public. Emergency Alert was also used by local governments during this period.
53. The Toowoomba DDMG has an active sub-committee (the communication sub group) chaired by Barbara Ryan (a university lecturer from the University of Southern Queensland). Barbara chairs a group which provides DDMG's and LDMG's assistance in media and public relations matters. Lockyer Valley Regional Council also arranged for media support personnel from Brisbane City Council to assist for approximately two weeks.

Joint initiative between SES and QFRS

54. QFRS have representation on both the LDMG and DDMG and key staff were involved in exercise Hamish and exercise ORKO in 2010. Both of these exercises provided an opportunity for flood risks to be identified and communicated to all those participating in the exercises.
55. Members of QFRS also attended the QTCCC workshops in St George and Charleville where they were provided with a seasonal update by the BOM. QFRS and QAS staff also attended some of the December, daily SDMG teleconferences with EMQ staff in the regional conference room.

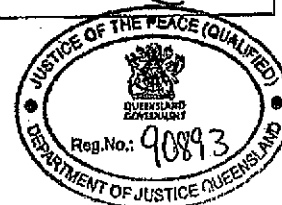
Flood Response Training – QFRS and EMQ

56. Strategic relationships between EMQ and QFRS are outside of my position as Area-Director EMQ Eastern.
57. QFRS and EMQ (at a local level) work well together and have a good working relationship in general.

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EMQ in the Southwest Region

58. EMQ South West region was not short-staffed due to members being tasked to Rockhampton or the North Queensland Flood events. Members of staff who were deployed to assist other regions were back in their home region prior to the flooding events commencing on 27 December 2010.

Comments on areas for Improvement

59. In my role as Area Director, I am not able to comment on matters of policy or provide an opinion as to general improvements that may be made to disaster management practices at the State or Regional level.

60. I make this statement of my own free will believing its contents to be true and correct.

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of Section 110A (6) (c) (ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 24/03/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 7 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make it knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating anything that I know is false.

..... Signature
[Handwritten Signature]

Signed at Toowoomba this 25th day of March 2011

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