

Name of Witness	MANN, Alistair John Keith
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]
Address and contact details	[REDACTED]
Occupation	Carer
Officer taking statement	REID, Mark John Detective Senior Sergeant 6091
Date taken	7 March 2011

Alistair John Keith MANN states:

- I am a single man, [REDACTED] years of age and I currently reside at [REDACTED] Upper Lockyer.
- I have had some involvement with helping in disasters in the Murphy's Creek area back in 2002 when the area had to be evacuated due to a bush fire. I assisted with the back burning of some areas to try and lessen the effect the fire had on the community. We were required to leave our houses for just the one afternoon. Other than this incident I am not aware of any local disaster plan or evacuation plan for the area.
- During December 2010 we had had a large amount of rain which resulted in some minor flooding around my area on 9 December 2010. We continued to get rain through December and January 2011.
- On Monday 10 January 2011, I was at home between 1pm and 2pm. It had been raining heavily all day and I knew there would be some flooding. It was more rain than I had seen before in the area. I was not concerned about my home flooding as I live quite high up on a hill. During that time I decided to go for a drive into Murphy's Creek to see what was happening. As I got to Koorelah Street I saw that cars were stopped at Parsons Nursery due to the depth of the water flowing across the road.

Exhibit Number:

QFCI

Date:

29/4/11

JMK

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Witness Signature: [REDACTED] Signature of officer *solicitor*

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- 5. After ¾ of an hour I managed to get to the intersection of Murphys Creek Road and Milora Road, but the water was flowing so hard I could not get across. I was told this was the spot that two females (Thelma and Angie) were rescued from the water by Ian HODDINOTT and two young fellows. Both woman were hanging onto a tree and Ian and the two young fellows went out and brought them back to the dry area of the road. I dropped Ian home at Jessies Lane, Murphys Creek. I started to locate people affected by the floods. From about 4pm to 8pm I was down at 15 Mile Road helping people.

- 6. The following day I went back into Murphy’s Creek. I took a generator into town and helped set it up behind the rear of the Murphy’s Creek Hotel which was being used as a recovery centre for the town as they needed power to run their fridges. I then drove back up 15 Mile Road and assisted with making some road repairs. I also checked on a man at Penderest Road who was a diabetic. This man turned out to be okay. Whilst we were working I was keeping in contact with Murphy’s Creek using a two way radio.

Warning

- 7. Prior to the flood on 10 January 2011 I am not aware of any warnings to any of the Murphy’s Creek residents. For future events I think that we should try and make some sort of early warning system which would include permanent mobile telephone towers in town. The communication for the residents is poor and mobile telephones do not work in many places. The power was lost in our area at 2.00pm.

Flood Preparation

- 8. There are no plans for flood preparation in our area that I am aware of. I think that education should be something to consider in future to stop people driving

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[Redacted]

Signature of officer

[Redacted]

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into flooded creeks and roads. At home we did keep tin food for emergencies, and I always have access to a radio. To assist in flood preparation for the community the clearing and cleaning of the waterways could assist reduce the risk of flooding.

- 9. I also believe that the building of dams by persons in waterways contributes to the flooding of waterways. I am aware that there are a couple of dams within the Lockyer Valley and other areas built by persons being fed by waterways. These dams fill up in times of flood putting pressure on dam walls. Once the walls let go a wall of water is created. I also believe that the clearing of debris from waterways would also contribute to enhanced operation of waterways in times of flood. The construction of more water escapes through the Murphy Creek rail line would also assist in stopping the build up of water. It would allow the water to disperse gradually.

Response

- 10. After the event it was hard for the Emergency Services to get into the town due to the state of the roads from Toowoomba and Gatton. The Emergency Services were good in the area after their arrival which took some time. The Rural Fire Brigade could also do with some training in this sort of event, because they made some mistakes like parking their trucks in the middle of the hotel carpark, obstructing the access of the area. (I believe that this was because the vehicles were decommissioned as a result of the flood).
- 11. The town was offered some assistance by a variety of agencies. The Queensland Fire Brigade were the first group into the area, but a majority of the response was volunteers. Some time in 1-2 weeks Government resources arrived like the SES and the outside units of the Rural Fire Brigade. The roads had been closed off to stop people driving into the creeks which were still flooded, but the road closures

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were unmanned so people drove around them. These people were mostly sight seers. We also need to stop people sight seeing in the area during the response period.

- 12. The person that was responsible for a lot of the co-ordination of the response in Murphy Creek was Sue Haughey from the Murphy's Creek Tavern. She allowed everyone access to the Hotel and managed the feeding of everyone. All of the people at the Hotel who were helping were volunteers. A lot of people were helping, like Dan Tyson and Janelle Gitchum. I also think the electricity people did a marvellous job in getting the power on in 7 days due to the damage.
- 13. Communication was a problem and we relied on 2 way radios to keep in contact with other people, but we probably needed a temporary repeater station in the area to help. The sharing of information needs to be improved because we relied on word of mouth to hear about the evacuation centre, food and water.

Recovery

- 14. During the recovery stage I think the response was satisfactory. The power was returned to the area as quickly as it could due to loss of power poles. A friend of mine who lives opposite the Helidon Spa waited three weeks before anyone came near him. There appeared to be no co-ordinated checks of residences through the flood affected areas including the Helidon Spa end of Postmans Ridge.
- 15. For future incidents the volunteers need to be updated on what is happening so people can understand why things are being done. Perhaps a notice board could be used with updates that people can then read, or using a spokesperson in the local community.

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16. I think that the over growth in the creek areas contributed in clogging the waterways and causing damming which wouldn't have helped. The other main point I would like to make would be that education is important in stopping people driving into flooded causeways and waterways.

Alistair John Keith MANN

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 ...26/4/11... 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 Witchcott this 26th day of April 2011


S. L. L. L. L.

Witness Signature..... Signature of officer