

A Submission to the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry (“QFCI”) from certain local residents of Chelmer, Graceville, Sherwood and Oxley areas

7 April 2011

1. Preparation and planning by federal, state and local governments, emergency services and the community

We propose that the QFCI require an independent investigation regarding the:

- **adequacy of stormwater and sewerage drainage systems in the Chelmer, Graceville and Sherwood areas and such other relevant areas – given that it is established by the substantial and compelling evidence and experience of local residents (in particular those residents who neighbour the Chelmer Reserve) that such systems failed in respect of the flood. Such failure contributed and added to the 2010-2011 flood;**
- **expenditure and maintenance systems undertaken by Government to determine whether the stormwater and sewerage drainage systems in the Chelmer, Graceville and Sherwood areas and such other relevant areas are properly maintained, structurally sound, adequate and fit for purpose;**
- **management of the Brisbane River, in particular having regard to its decreasing capacity and rising river bed (due to increased siltation – among other things).**

- 2. The response to the 2010/2011 flood events, particularly measures taken to inform the community and protect life, private and public property.**

We propose that the QFCI require an independent investigation regarding the:

- adequacy of measures to provide forewarning and information to persons in the Chelmer, Graceville and Sherwood and other flood affected areas – given that it is established by the substantial and compelling evidence and experience of local residents that there was a material system failure in respect of the warning of the flood. In particular there was a failure to provide timely warning, websites such as that of the Brisbane City Council were down, radio and television forums were underutilized for the purpose of advising sufficiently in advance.**

Further information directly relevant to locals and their areas (including but not limited to Reduced Levels R.L.) could have and should have been provided sufficiently in advance to enable persons in flood affected areas to make informed decisions in a timely manner.

Such systemic failure contributed and added to substantial damage and loss of property given that flood affected persons were not able to make sufficient provision in advance of the 2010-2011 flood;

- adequacy of the evacuation measures to provide information to persons in flood affected areas – to ensure that persons can implement safe and sufficient evacuation plans in the event of an impending flood. In particular in respect of areas such as Chelmer, Graceville and Sherwood and other such areas that have limited access given their geography and river border.**

- 3. Measures to manage the supply of essential services**

We propose that the QFCI require that Communication systems be critically reviewed given there is substantial evidence to confirm that mobile phone systems, networks and towers were overloaded and failed before and during the flood period.

4. Adequacy of forecasts and early warning systems

We propose that the QFCI require that adequate systems be investigated and be put in place to ensure more accurate flood and water flow modelling and projection measures to improve earlier warning detection. This will ensure people in flood or likely flood affected areas have greater time to prepare.

5. Implementation of systems operation plans for dams

No proposed submission

6. Land use planning

We propose that the QFCI require that the town planning be reviewed in respect of flood affected areas to:

- confirm whether the stormwater and sewerage drainage systems in the Chelmer, Graceville and Sherwood areas are adequate for proposed and continued land development to support the increased water flow arising from increased population density in such areas.**
- confirm whether revenue collected under the banner of 'headworks' is being utilized toward drainage management and flood mitigation works.**

