

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Prepared by: Legal Services Unit

Prepared by: Legal Services Unit

Date: 9 May 2011

Name of Witness: PETER JAMES BEAUCHAMP

Address of Witness: Regional Headquarters, QFRS, Beenleigh.

Occupation: QFRS Officer

Position: Assistant Commissioner, QFRS South Eastern Region

Telephone: [REDACTED]

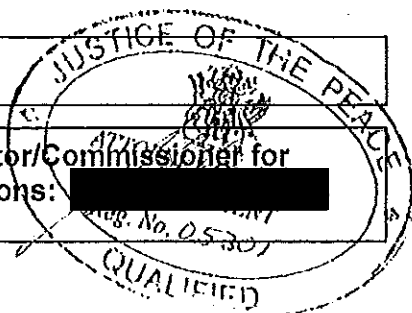
I, Peter James Beauchamp, Assistant Commissioner, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, South Eastern Region, Department of Community Safety state:

1. I commenced my Queensland Fire and Rescue Service career on the 16 April 1974, as a firefighter with the Metropolitan Fire Brigades Board, Brisbane. I have held numerous management positions as a senior fire officer following appointment to the rank of District Officer in July 1990 upon the formation of a single Fire and Rescue Service in Queensland. I was promoted to the rank of Assistant Commissioner, Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) on 28 October 2002 with appointment to Far Northern Region (FNR). I was transferred, and appointed Assistant Commissioner South Eastern Region (SER) on 23 October 2006.
2. I hold post-graduate degree qualifications in management (University of Western Sydney, NSW), Graduate Diploma in Fire Engineering (IFE), Advanced Diploma of Public Safety 'Firefighting Management', Associate Diploma in Applied Science 'Fire Technology', Diploma in Training and Assessment Systems and a Diploma in Frontline Management. I have also successfully completed national programs in executive leadership and strategic planning, executive command and disaster management, and project management.
3. I am a recipient of the Australian Fire Service Medal (AFSM), Australia's highest honours for a firefighter, acknowledged in the 1999 Australia Day Honours List. The Australian National Medal for Meritorious Service with 2nd Clasp, and the QFRS Ethical and Diligent Service Medal with 2nd Clasp in recognition of long and diligent service as a Queensland firefighter. I have also been awarded the Australia Day Achievement Medallion in 2001 and 2006 for leadership and major contributions in the Department of Community Safety, Queensland.

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4. As Assistant Commission FNR, I also lead the QFRS operational response for Cyclone Larry in 2006.
5. I was bestowed Honorary Life Membership of the Kirra Surf Life Saving Club, Gold Coast Queensland (Est.1916) in recognition of meritorious service and commitment to the ideals of surf life saving, community safety, and club administration.
6. The Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) South Eastern Region occupies the area to the south and south-east of Brisbane to the New South Wales border, and immediate west and north-west of Brisbane to the Great Dividing Range. The Region contains some of the fastest developing urban cities and rural communities, population and land use growth areas in Queensland. The region includes Gold Coast City (the sixth largest city in Australia), Logan City, Ipswich City, and towns and communities within the Scenic Rim Regional Council, Lockyer Valley Regional Council, and Somerset Regional Council areas having a current population of approximately 1.2 million residents. The region is also acknowledged as a major national and international tourist destination.
7. At the current population growth rate it is forecasted that the whole of region population may exceed two million residents by Year 2026 (Reference: Office of Urban Management).
8. QFRS South Eastern Region 'All hazards' frontline operational services are delivered through thirty-four Fire and Rescue Stations and eighty-seven Rural Fire Brigades. A "no boundaries" operational management arrangement is practiced between QFRS South Eastern Region and the neighboring QFRS South Western Region and QFRS Brisbane Region. An operational mutual support arrangement is established with Fire and Rescue NSW (FSNSW) and the NSW Rural Fire Service (NSWRFS). A mutual support Memorandum of Agreement was signed by the Commissioners QFRS and FSNSW in November 2005.

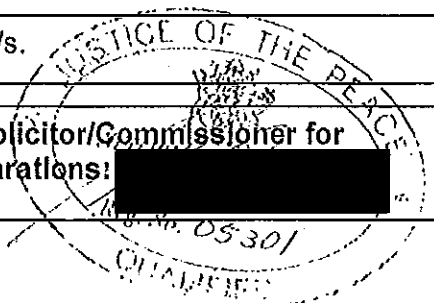
QFRS South Eastern Region operational resources include:

- Regional staffing includes 487 permanent fire officers, technical and administrative staff, 240 auxiliary firefighters, and approximately 3,100 volunteer firefighters;
- Regional Headquarters (RHQ) for urban and rural operations is located at Beenleigh - 32 Tansey Street, Beenleigh QLD, (QAS Regional Headquarters is co-located with QFRS at Beenleigh);
- Regional Operational Coordination Centre (ROCC) located at RHQ Beenleigh;
- Regional Fire Communications Centre (Firecom South East) located at the Regional Operations Facility, Southport;
- Sixteen permanent staffed (10/14 roster) Fire and Rescue Stations;
- Eighteen auxiliary staffed Fire and Rescue Stations;
- Eighty-seven Rural Fire Brigades;
- Seventy-four urban and one hundred and fifty-five rural operational fire appliances, and forty operational support vehicles;
- Community Safety Operations Command (Offices at Regional Operations Facilities at Southport and Beenleigh);
- Regional Professional Development Command (Regional Operations Facility, Beenleigh);
- Regional Technical Rescue staff and specialised appliances located at Robina, Beenleigh and Ipswich Fire and Rescue Stations;

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- Regional Breathing Apparatus/HAZMAT operational support and training centre at the Regional Operations Facility, Southport;
- Regional Fire Investigation Unit (Full time Coordinator located Regional Operations Facility, Beenleigh);
- Fleet Engineering Workshops (Regional Operations Facilities, Southport and Ipswich);
- Regional Operational Logistics stores (Regional Operations Facilities at Beenleigh, Southport and Ipswich);
- Regional Duty Manager Operations (Office: RHQ Beenleigh);
- Rural Operations Regional Command (Office: RHQ Beenleigh);
- Rural Operations Area Command (Office: QFRS Regional Operations Facility, Ipswich);
- Gold Coast Zone Command (Office: Regional Operations Facility, Southport);
- Gold Coast South Area Command (Office: Regional Operations Facility, Southport);
- Gold Coast North Area Command (Office: QFRS Regional Operations Facility, Southport);
- Scenic Rim Area Command (Office: Beaudesert Fire and Rescue Station);
- West Moreton Zone Command (Office: QFRS Regional Operations Facility, Ipswich);
- Logan Area Command (Office: QFRS Regional Operations Facility, Beenleigh);
- Ipswich Area Command (Office: QFRS Regional Operations Facility, Ipswich);
- Lockyer/Somerset Area Command (Office: Gatton).

Attachment: QFRS South Eastern Region 'Organisational Structure'

- I was on approved annual leave from 17 December 2010 to 25 January 2011. Chief Superintendent John Gresty AFSM (SER Director Regional Operations) was relieving as Acting Assistant Commissioner South Eastern Region for this period. During my annual leave I would check the BoM on developing weather conditions across Queensland, including areas of south-east Queensland,
- On Monday 10 January 2011 afternoon I was monitoring the developing weather conditions (television, BoM from home). During my telephone discussion with Chief Superintendent John Gresty AFSM (relieving as Acting Assistant Commissioner SER) on regional operational preparations and Swift Water Rescue/Water Assist activities in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset local government areas (LGA/s), I informed him that I would travel from home to SER Regional Headquarters (RHQ Beenleigh) to support operations from the Regional Operations Coordination Centre (ROCC).
- I returned to duty and was located at the SER Regional Headquarters (RHQ Beenleigh) on Monday 10 January 2011 at approximately 4pm. I contacted QFRS Acting Deputy Commissioner Ian Mitchell and advised him of my decision and availability. I remained at the ROCC throughout Monday night to 5am Tuesday 11 January at which time I returned home for a shower and fresh uniform.
- I returned to SER Regional Headquarters at approx. 9am Tuesday 11 January and given the increased operations activity across South Eastern Region, I contacted the QFRS Acting Deputy Commissioner and advised that I would defer the remainder of my approved annual leave until later in the year. Chief Superintendent John Gresty resumed his position as Director Regional Operations. QFRS SER staff and Department of Community Safety Regional QAS/EMQ Executives were advised.

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Response to issues raised by the requirement dated 29 April 2011:

In relation to preparation and training:

Response: Operational Planning and reviewing capability preparedness is a core annual activity within the QFRS that takes into consideration information relating to seasonal incidents such as bush fire and wet seasons. A number of South Eastern Region 'All Hazards' planning activities were well progressed (Refer: Planning activities listed Page 5/6) prior to the Australian Bureau of Metrology (BoM) briefing on 12 October 2010.

In QFRS South Eastern Region, all permanent and auxiliary personnel have been provided access to the DCS Portal link to the Department's Website and to the range of policies, procedures and templates to support them in their roles and day to day functional activities. This DCS Homepage provides the access to the DCS structure, associated legislation, policy, procedures, applications, and news updates. This DCS Homepage also includes the Gateway to the respective Department Divisional Homepages, including that of the QFRS.

The QFRS Homepage provides access for all personnel to information such as: Commissioner News; DCS Strategic Updates; Latest Newsletters; Tools and Services that includes the QFRS Bookshelf, Core Skills Training Program, Training Information, Fire Station Listings and Firecare contacts.

Under Policy and Procedures (QFRS Homepage) all personnel can access Code of Practice, Standing Orders, Operations Doctrine, Command and Rural Fire Brigade Manuals, and the QFRS Bookshelf. In addition to these, all personnel can access a range of Government and other Agency sites (including the Australian Bureau of Metrology – BoM) through the External Links section.

The QFRS Bookshelf is simply displayed for staff to easily access policies, procedures, guidelines and templates under the headings of Operations Management, Professional Development, Community Safety and Operations Business Management, and the Office of Commissioner.

The QFRS Bookshelf provides the tools for all personnel to utilize for their planning and recording performance of their fundamental and core day to day shift and station activities. In addition to this, Station shift responsibilities in relation to All Hazards operational planning and preparation are detailed for each and every officer in the QFRS Statewide Station Management Plan – Total Station Workload (TSWL) Functional Management and Responsibilities matrix. Day to day station personnel performance activities is recorded in the Station's Operating Management System (OMS).

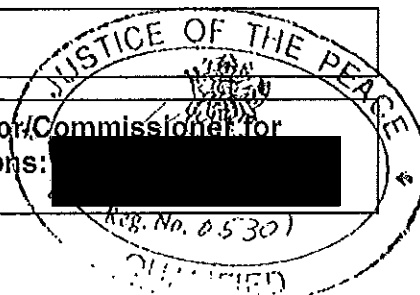
Area Commanders regularly visit and meet with station Officers-in-Charge and firefighters, and through their Tool Box discussions and inspections cover a range of topics including station/shift TSWL activities planned, staff development, training exercises planned and/or completed, personal protective clothing, appliance and station equipment inventories and operational readiness, local risks and developed Local Action Plans (LAP/s), bush fire season and wet season forecasts, regional and organisational directions (to name a few).

In accordance with TSWL roles and responsibilities, station Officers-in-Charge are supported by their respective Area Commanders to undertake regular station and Command area familiarisations (E.G. know you patch activity). Local knowledge is a fundamental operational tool for all firefighters. Local Action Plans (LAP/s) provide a useful tool for station personnel relevant to their identified area risks (including potential swift water hazards). Using the TSWL Template, station Officers-in-Charge and their station personnel can develop a pre-incident action plan that would be unique to that specific risk. This Plan provides details on conditions associated with the risk, and recommended operational actions in the event of an emergency. Developed regional LAP/s are placed on the SER Regional Homepage as an easy

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access reference for all SER personnel. For example, the Commander, Ipswich Area Commander in 2010 tasked a Station Officer in that Command to review and update all SWR LAP/s for that command.

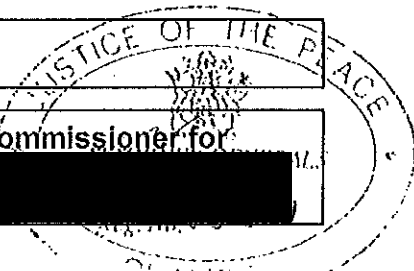
QFRS South Eastern Region also undertook a number of activities in addition to local station activities relevant to regional planning and preparations for the potential wet season, for example: Training Exercises, Review LAP/s; joint activities with other agencies, meetings with LDMG/s and DDMG/s, review of regional risks, review of resources, ROCC/ICC preparedness, and included (but not limited to the following):

- Commissioner Briefings – Tandberg – These briefings commenced in July 2010 - 27/10/10 Seasonal outlook briefing from the Commissioner on the likelihood of severe weather events across the State;
- October 2010 SER Technical Rescue Coordinator tasked to review SER Regional Swift Water Plan and ensure planning activities to have necessary SWR cache/s and appliances were available and located at pre-determined stations (Robina, Beenleigh and Ipswich). This was completed prior to Christmas 2010.
- Duty Manager Operations (DMO) attended Gold Coast City Council LDMG and DDMG meetings, viewed flood projections and assisted in providing a range of information about QFRS operations capability;
- Duty Manager Operations – October/November/December 2010 – Prior to and during adverse weather periods, monitored the BOM site radar and associated weather warnings, reviewed availability Swift Water Rescue and Technical Rescue staff location. As required, additional SWR resources and spare appliances were checked and ensured they were immediately available for deployment.
- Expression of Interest (6/10/2010) called for the full time position of Regional Technical Rescue Coordinator;
- Review Regional Operational Swift Water Plan and Regional Cache/s;
- Ongoing Swift Water Rescue L2 Technicians training programmed and undertaken at Wet and Wild, Gold Coast;
- Mapping on the Region's Tech Rescue (inc SWR) incidents and frequency for whole of Region (completed November 2010) and review of LAPS (October/November/December 2010);
- November 2010 - Establishment of an additional cache of technical rescue equipment - swift water rescue cache located at SER Regional Operational Precinct – Beenleigh;
- October/November/December 2010 – RIMT (ICC Teams) refresher training sessions – ongoing activity; 5/11/10 - RIMT IT Training for Western Command Staff after exercises at Ripley and Ipswich Fire Stations to set up Incident Control Centres (ICC);
- 9/10/11 November 2010 - Training of SER ROCC/ICC personnel in Incident Management Computer Recording Systems (ECC/EIAP);
- SER Major Events Planning participated in joint / multi Agency (QPS, QAS, LDMG, DDMG, External Stakeholders) operational Table Top exercises in preparation for 'Gold Coast 600 Motor Racing Event' and 'Schoolies 2010'.
- Area Commanders engaging with LDMG/DDMG's advising on QFRS operations capabilities to support disaster management strategies associated with the impact of a Tsunami and subsequent flooding on the Gold Coast beachside and canal communities;
- Regional Manager Rural Operations - Presentations to Gold Coast LDMG's 10/10/10 on SER structure and operations capacity to support LDMG;
- ROCC/DDMG Major Exercise - 14/10/10 ROCC refresher training scenario; 26/10/10 Debriefing of scenario conducted;
- Exercise Devils Twist – 24-25/11/10: Weather and flood themed exercise managed by DDMG Gold Coast with QFRS component dealing with swift water planning and communications between the DDMG and the SER ROCC.

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- Area Commander, Logan Command – Media Interviews 19/10/10, 16/11/10, 21/12/10 - Emergency services and flood waters - Don't enter flooded creeks, rivers and causeways, Know your limits, think safe;
- Area Commander, Logan Command - 21/10/10 - Attended "Demographic and Residential Development Forum" on Gold Coast - discussed the urban sprawl / housing prices / infill / impact of natural events (flooding);
- Area Commander, Logan Command – 13/10/10 attended Qld Tropical Cyclone pre season workshop;
- Regional Senior Fire Officers participate in information sessions on the new Disaster Management legislation;
- News updates are provided all QFRS personnel on the new Disaster Management arrangements;
- Area Commander, Ipswich Command initiated with local station Officers-in-Charge an increased awareness for all operational staff for flood water related rescue and preparedness arrangements. Colleges Crossing was cut for a number of days in December 2010. During this time swift water LAPS were updated to ensure plans were current. All staff were tasked to undertake refresher training in swift water rescue exercises with additional Swift Water Awareness Sessions provided to auxiliary staff within both Ipswich and Lockyer/Somerset Commands;
- An Inflatable Work Platform (IWP) was placed on the CR (645M) for the duration of the wet season;
- Area Commander, Lockyer/Somerset Command - 5/12/10 attended meeting at Lockyer Valley LDMG meeting covering disaster management preparation/planning strategies for Lockyer Valley LGA;
- SER Community Education Activities - October/November/December 2010 - Organised with the Department of Main Roads, a series of predetermined electronic messages to be displayed on major road's electronic signs. These messages advise motorists to stay out of water across roadways. This assisted in limiting the potential number of emergency incidents and therefore the requirement for Swift Water Rescue Interventions.
- SER Community Education Activities - Mates for Life Program – November 2010 - Technical Rescue Coordinator presented programs on the dangers of entering flooded causeways, playing near drains to school children across the Gold Coast Region;
- SER Community Education Activities – November 2010 – ongoing; Media alliance with Local Government promoting swift water safety message "If it's flooded, forget it".

The capacity of the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) to provide highly committed and trained firefighters, technicians and administrative staff to support communities in their time of need could not have been more successfully demonstrated than by what has been witnessed during the January 2011 flood disaster that impacted on communities across south-east Queensland.

Through our command and control system from the Regional Operations Coordination Centre (SER RHQ Beenleigh), Incident Coordination Centres at Gatton and Ipswich, and localised forward control IMT's, QFRS regional personnel have been professionally engaging with local and state government agencies, Queensland Police, and working closely with Local Disaster Management Groups in supporting our communities.

QFRS South Easter Region operational involvement between the 10th and 25th January 2011 for initial response and subsequent community recovery/cleanup arrangements included over 6,488 regional personnel and 1,874 operational vehicle activations, participating in a total of 6,261 flood disaster emergency incident and related activities.

In addition to the flood disaster operations, SER maintained day to day operational readiness and emergency incident response capability for the whole of South Eastern Region for the Gold Coast City;

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Logan City; Ipswich City; Scenic Rim Regional Council; Somerset Regional Council and Lockyer Valley Regional Council towns and communities.

Breakdown of communication: It has been suggested that there has been a breakdown of communication between senior management and the operational staff, resulting in a lack of preparedness for an emergency response of this scale:

Response: I was unaware of and did not view a breakdown in communications between SER Senior Fire Officers (Commanders) and station personnel that impacted on QFRS South Eastern Region planning, preparations and training. On the contrary, I observed the commitment by staff at all levels to the planning and preparations for not only a potential fire season (mid 2010), but subsequently a increase in operational activity that may be associated with a more intense than normal wet season.

In addition to this, SER regional personnel liaising with regional senior fire officers were most willing to volunteer and be a part of the QFRS intra-state deployments teams that traveled to central Queensland to support communities that were flood inundated prior to and following Christmas 2010.

Furthermore, the significant operations activities undertaken in South Eastern Region as detailed above could only have been achieved through good and thorough planning, preparations and operations management strategies, and effective communications at all levels within QFRS.

Forewarning as to the scale of threat: It is suggested that QFRS had forewarning of the scale of the threat and did not undertake adequate preparations, especially with regards to staffing:

Response: On the 12 October 2010 BoM advised and forecasted an exceptionally wet season that could include up to six cyclones. QFRS South Eastern Region planning and preparations (as summarized above) were based on this and ongoing advice provided by BoM. To my knowledge, QFRS South Eastern Region received no forewarning as to the scale of the threat and the subsequent flash flood that swept down the Great Dividing Range devastating communities in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset local government areas.

Weather forecast information: It is suggested that QFRS management had weather forecast information that was not passed on to operational crews:

Response: All QFRS South Eastern Region personnel have access to the QFRS Homepage and the other Agency sites (including the Australian Bureau of Metrology – BoM). Area Commanders through their station visits provide updates on the wet season planning and preparations.

I was advised that on Monday morning 10 January, the SER Duty Manager Operations (SER DMO) monitored the BoM on weather conditions forecasted for south-east Queensland and provided an update to the SER Acting Assistant Commissioner, Director Regional Operations and Regional Manager Rural Operations. The Acting Assistant Commissioner contacted the Area Commander, Lockyer/Somerset Command (office located in Gatton) to discuss the BoM weather conditions forecasted, Command preparedness and regional operations planning activities in preparation for forecasted heavy rainfalls. QFRS fire and rescue stations and rural fire brigades were also notified on forecasted changing weather conditions.

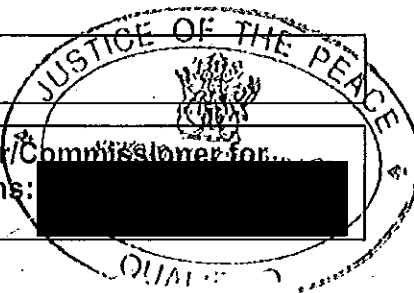
Emergency response:

Response: The QFRS Operations Doctrine is the Fire and Rescue Service state-wide approach to emergency response and incident management. Components include: QFRS Incident Management System; Incident Action Guides; Incident Directives; Incident Forms and Tools; and Field Incident Incident

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Guides. The QFRS Operations Doctrine is included in all personnel core training, is utilized for 'All hazards' planning and preparations, and response and incident management.

QFRS South Eastern Region personnel whether they be volunteer, auxiliary and permanent firefighters, swift water technicians, USAR rapid damage assessment teams, Firecom staff, regional mechanics, operations support and administration staff, Firecare PSOs, and many more have undertaken key roles throughout this disaster event. Tasks ranged from initial emergency response, command and control, communications, swift water rescue, search and recovery, water event assists, evacuation support, to damage assessment and property clean up, and a broad range of other operations tasks within the central and western communities of the region devastated by flash flooding and water inundation.

On Monday 10 January 2011, station and brigade personnel in their small towns and communities in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset LGA/s whilst not only endeavoring to keep their families safe, assisted friends and neighbours in their hour of need. QFRS SER appliance crews and Swift Water Teams were mobilised to the region's western towns and communities, supporting local brigade/station crews and together worked tirelessly in extremely challenging and dangerous situations. Undoubtedly this collective effort during the initial stages of this devastating event by local stations and brigades, and the additional appliance crews mobilized assisted in saving lives.

Firecom South East maintained frontline operations communications throughout the initial emergency response period on Monday 10 January, ongoing search and rescue activities, and supported QFRS resources assisting with the property cleanup within communities, as well as required day to day operational readiness and emergency incident response for the whole of Region. An additional two Fire Communications Officers were called back to duty to Firecom South East on the afternoon of 10 January 2011. An increased (above normal roster) for Firecom South East staffing arrangement was maintained supporting regional operations activities.

As the flood waters receded attention focused on property damage assessment undertaken by our regional Technical Rescue/USAR technicians and the interstate deployed FRNSW USAR Taskforce (located in Gatton). QFRS South Eastern Region personnel received tasking requests from Local Disaster Management Groups and these were coordinated through the Ipswich/Gatton ICC's. Information on property damage was provided to the Local Disaster Management Groups. This information was also utilized by the Ipswich and Gatton ICC/s for planning and tasking SER Recovery Strike Teams and appliance crews with property cleanup activities.

The interstate deployed FRNSW USAR Taskforce of forty-two personnel was located at Gatton Showgrounds from the evening of Wednesday 12th January 2011, and undertook LDMG and QPS taskings through the ICC Gatton. Sphere of operations for the Task Force focused on the inundated towns and communities in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset local government areas.

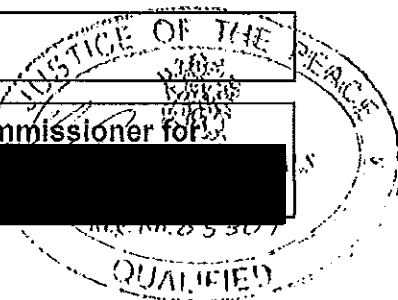
Volunteer, auxiliary and permanent firefighters and officers from fire and rescue stations, and rural fire brigades were mobilised from across South Eastern Region into Recovery Taskforce and Strike Teams undertook QFRS operations activities within the Locker Valley, Somerset, Scenic Rim and Ipswich local government communities to assist with the property recovery and clean up activities. During the peak day periods supporting property cleanup activities there were up to one hundred and fifty appliance crews operating under the direction of Ipswich and Gatton ICC/s.

On one occasion of the many early morning deployment briefings, a Taskforce of forty-four brigade/station appliances crewed by over one hundred and forty regional firefighters gathered in the carpark opposite the RHQ Beenleigh. I attended and observed the selfless commitment demonstrated by these crews, combining the resource strength of our brigades and stations into a single QFRS Taskforce Unit focused on fire and rescue community service delivery.

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A Regional Mechanical Strike Team crewed by SER mechanics from the Regional Fleet Workshops supported field servicing of rural and urban appliances for several days whilst based in Gatton.

QFRS Firecare has been available and engaged with regional staff and volunteers from the initial stages of the Floods Disaster. Our Regional Firecare Peer Support Coordinator, Regional/State PSO's and Specialists, and QFRS Chaplains Les Shaw (now retired) and Bob Strong were in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset areas from the 11 January providing support for QFRS personnel and local communities. Firecare support arrangements continue to be provided staff, volunteers and their families who were involved and/or impacted by the events associated with the Floods Disaster.

South Eastern Region – Flood Disaster Operations were coordinated through SER Incident Coordination Centres located in the central and western areas of the Region, the Regional Operations Coordination Centre (ROCC) located at Beenleigh, and supported by the QFRS State Operations Coordination Centre (SOCC) located at DCS State Office, Kedron, Park Brisbane, and included:

- Regional Operations Coordination Centre (ROCC) at SER RHQ Beenleigh;
- Incident Coordination Centres (ICC) at Gatton and Ipswich; and
- Forward command IMT's and Strike Team staging locations located at Fernvale, Esk, Withcott, Murphys Creek, Grantham, Limestone Park, Beenleigh as well as a number of other station and brigade locations (as required).

The ROCC and ICC/s were established and staffed by permanent, auxiliary and volunteer personnel operating continuously (24 hours/day) coordinating operations activities including taskings allocated by local LDMG, QPS; other agency engagement; communications; planning; operations coordination; and supporting station, brigade and specialist crews in their field of operations. The regional ROCC at RHQ Beenleigh, and the ICC/s at Gatton and Ipswich remained active while taskings for community assistance were being received from the local LDMG/s. The SER ROCC closed on 25 January 2011 following the closure of the Ipswich ICC (24 January) and Gatton ICC (25 January).

Regional personnel are trained at various levels of the QFRS Incident Management System (Australian Inter-Service Incident Management System – AIIMS) that includes AIIMS Awareness (4 hours Program), AIIMS/IMS Intermediate Program (16 hours – 2 days Program), and AIIMS/IMS Management (40 hours – 5 days Program).

Experienced and qualified (AIIMS Operations Management) QFRS SER regional senior officers were allocated Command responsibilities as the ROCC Coordinator at regional headquarters and the ICC/s Incident Controller at Ipswich and Gatton for the duration of the ROCC and ICC/s activations. Officers undertaking operations functional roles of Planning and Logistics in the ROCC and ICC/s have been trained in AIIMS.

QFRS SER regional station officers (AIIMS Operations Management qualifications) were located into the DCS Emergency Management Queensland – Regional Operations Centre located at Ormeau (south of Beenleigh) to support EMQ operations planning and coordination arrangements.

The SER Director Regional Operations, Chief Superintendent John Gresty AFSM was located in the Lockyer Valley (operating out of Gatton) on the afternoon of Monday 10 January 2011 to provide additional support and experience in operations command. He remained in the Lockyer Valley area until Saturday 15 January 2011.

The SER ROCC provided regular regional updates on the extent of the flood inundation, property damage, operations activities, staffing arrangements and regional capacity to meet operations response requirements to the QFRS State Operations Coordination Centre (SOCC) in the form of written/electronic reports and/or verbal reports. Daily video and/or teleconferencing were conducted between the ROCC

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and ICC's for situational updates, resourcing and staff welfare/support requirements, and also between the ROCC and SOCC.

QFRS SER regional officers including Rural Operations personnel with good local community knowledge were located into Local Government Disaster Groups (Lockyer Valley Regional Council; Somerset Regional Council; Ipswich City Council) providing advice on QFRS station and brigade operations capability, and communicating LDMG taskings to the QFRS ICC's.

I communicated with DCS regional executives (QAS Assistant Commissioner Jayne Barnes and EMQ Regional Director Eddie Bennett) on QFRS current and planned activities and mutual support arrangements as required.

SUMMARY OF QFRS REGIONAL OPERATIONS

From recorded data available and subsequently collated by the SER Regional Data Retrieval Project Team, the following provides a summary on regional frontline operations associated with the Flood Disaster initial response, and the following community recovery support activities provided by personnel in South Eastern Region from 10th January to 25th January 2011.

QFRS SOUTH EASTERN REGION (SER) PERSONNEL ACTIVATIONS

6,488 Personnel Activations – Total QFRS South Eastern Region permanent, auxiliary and volunteer firefighter and other staff activations that included:

- 2,548 - Permanent and Auxiliary firefighter activations to crew appliances;
- 3,419 - Volunteer firefighter activations to crew appliances;
- 31 - Technical, Mechanical and Welfare Support Personnel activations;
- 490 - Permanent, Auxiliary, Volunteer officers and firefighters, Administrative and Technical Support Personnel activations staffing the ROCC, ICC's and IMT's; and
- 48 - FSNSW USAR Taskforce located a Gatton (12/01/2011 – PM).

QFRS South Eastern Region personnel (Permanent; Auxiliary and Volunteer Officers/Firefighters, Technical and Administrative Staff) involved in the South Eastern Region Flood Disaster activations (Response, recovery, ICC's, ROCC, Strike Teams, Firecom; Welfare; etc): TOTAL = 1,086 personnel (officers were involved in multiple operational activations for the initial response and subsequent community recovery activities).

QFRS SOUTH EASTERN REGION (SER) FIRE APPLIANCE AND OTHER VEHICLE/S ACTIVATIONS

1,874 Vehicle Activations - Total QFRS South Eastern Region operational vehicle activations that included:

- 409 – Fire and Rescue Station appliance activations;
- 1,110 - Rural Fire Brigade appliance activations; and
- 355 - Operational Support vehicle activations (ERV's; Operations Support; Fleet Mechanical; Special).

QFRS SOUTH EASTERN REGION (SER) INCIDENT ACTIVITIES

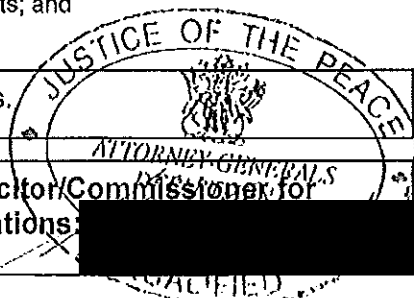
6,261 – Flood Disaster incidents and related activities - Total Flood Disaster incidents and related activities undertaken by QFRS South Eastern Region personnel, (including FRNSW USAR Taskforce RDA activities), that included:

- 223 - Swift Water Rescue and Water Assists;
- 130 – Air Operations;
- 16 - Search and Recovery QPS Assists;
- 3,232 - Rapid Damage Assessments (inc. FRNSW Taskforce activities in Lockyer Valley/Somerset LGA's);
- 2,754 - Residential/other premises assists and washouts; and

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- 6 – Building pump outs.

In addition to this Flood Disaster operations, South Eastern Region maintained operational readiness and emergency response capability supporting the Gold Coast City, Logan City, Ipswich City, and towns and communities of the Scenic Rim Regional Council, Somerset Regional Council and Lockyer Valley Regional Council areas.

It is impossible to mention each and every single event that occurred and the outstanding contributions made by all QFRS personnel directly impacted and/or subsequently involved throughout the flood disaster response and recovery operations. However, I can state how proud I am to be Assistant Commissioner, QFRS South Eastern Region, and to have the opportunity to work with the wonderful men and women who continue to provide the highest standards of fire and rescue frontline community service delivery.

It recognition of outstanding and exceptional performances I have recommended a number of SER regional personnel for nomination for National and Humane Society Bravery Awards and QFRS Commissioner Certifications of Commendation (individual and unit citations).

Prompt and proactive response: It is suggested that QFRS did not act promptly and proactively in response to the floods:

Response: The above-mentioned summary on Planning and Preparations and Emergency Response provides detail of the significant resources and coordination activities associated with the flood events prior to and following the 10 January 2011. I am advised that early on Monday morning 10 January the weather conditions were being monitored, on-duty Swift Water Crews (SWR) and additional SWR resources were being called back to duty were relocated to central and western areas of the region. SWR appliance crews were also located at stations in the Logan City and Gold Coast City to deal with potential flood water activities in these cities. An additional SWR appliance was mobilized from the QFRS Special Operations Centre, Brisbane and was located in Gatton.

QFRS South Easter Region operational involvement between the 10th and 25th January 2011 for initial response and subsequent community recovery/cleanup arrangements included over 6,488 regional personnel and 1,874 operational vehicle activations, participating in a total of 6,261 flood disaster emergency incident and related activities.

In addition to the flood disaster operations, SER maintained day to day operational readiness and emergency incident response capability for the whole of South Eastern Region for the Gold Coast City; Logan City; Ipswich City; Scenic Rim Regional Council; Somerset Regional Council and Lockyer Valley Regional Council towns and communities.

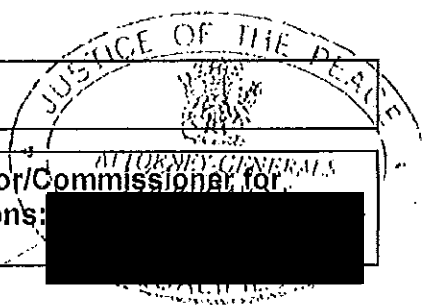
Information on road closures: That QFRS staff did not have adequate information about road closures:

Response: During the peak of the flood inundation of the 10 January 2011 and owing to the extensive impact associated with the flood waters within the Lockyer Valley and Somerset areas, QFRS SER did not have specific details on what roads were or were not passable. However LDMG's within these areas were providing road closure details to the QFRS officer in the LDMG when available. As further information on road closures became available to LDMG/s, the BoM, and local station and brigade crews in their communities, these details were regularly provided to the Galton and Ipswich ICC/s and included in reports to the ROCC and the SOCC.

I observed several crew briefings, and available road closure details were included in these operational briefings.

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Decisions made without input from staff: It is suggested that important decisions were made by management in locations removed from the event without acting on the advice of operational staff on the ground:

Response: I am unaware of decisions being made by Incident Controllers at IMT/s and ICC/s that were contradictory to the advice being provided by appliance Officers-in-Charge. Additionally, several SER senior fire officers were regularly operating in the field of operations both during the peak and following the flash flooding of the communities in the Lockyer, Somerset and Ipswich LGA/s discussing with and supporting appliance crews.

Lack of direction from senior management: It is suggested that there was a lack of direction from senior management about the overall coordination and deployment of personnel and equipment, leaving decisions to be made by officers on the ground:

Response: I must compliment the performance of the regional senior fire officers for their professional commitment and performance during this significant period of operations. They demonstrated sound Command, Leadership and Management of QFRS personnel and resources under very difficult circumstances. These experienced and qualified QFRS SER regional senior officers were allocated Command responsibilities as the ROCC Coordinator at regional headquarters and the ICC/s Incident Controller at Ipswich and Gatton for the duration of the ROCC and ICC/s, and other operational Command functions.

The SER ROCC and ICC teams were established early and staffed by permanent and volunteer personnel operating continuously (24 hours/day) coordinating local community engagement, communications, planning, operations, staff welfare, supporting station, brigade and specialist crews in their field of operations.

I also acknowledge the leadership demonstrated by the appliance Officers-in-Charge who with their crews responded to a diverse range of emergency incidents across south-east Queensland. Regional personnel participated in 6,261 Flood Disaster incidents and related activities between the 10th and 25th January 2011.

This significant operations activity over fifteen days could not have been undertaken if there was not sound command, leadership and management applied at all levels by senior fire officers and appliance officers-in-charge, communicating and working together throughout this period of operations.

Lack of coordinated management for emergency response: It is suggested that there was a lack of coordinated management of the emergency response within and between fire stations and incident control centres:

Response: I am unaware of and received no advice on the lack of coordination and communication between stations and ICC/s. Between the 10th and 25th January 2011 there were 6,488 QFRS South Eastern Region permanent, auxiliary and volunteer firefighter and other staff activations from SER fire and rescue stations, rural fire brigades, and offices from across the Region.

The Ipswich and Gatton ICC/s regularly contacted the fire and rescue stations, and rural fire brigades within the Lockyer Valley, Somerset, Ipswich and Scenic Rim LGA/s seeking an update on their operational status, potential impact of flood inundation, welfare on the station/brigade personnel and their families, and if they had personally experienced flood inundation to their homes/property.

Other than for the severe property damage to the Murphys Creek and Grantham Rural Fire Brigade stations, all other QFRS SER fire and rescue stations and rural fire brigades (some minor water inundation and property damage) appliances and crews in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset local

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government areas reported (10th January 2011) their availability to support operations. These local QFRS SER fire and rescue stations and rural brigade fire brigade appliances were operational ready and supported their local towns and communities during the peak and immediately following the flash flooding and property water inundation undertaking numerous community assist and evacuation operations activities.

AIIMS not properly implemented: It is suggested that the Australian Inter-Service Management System (AIIMS) was not properly implemented:

Response: The Australian Inter-Service Incident Management System (AIIMS) is the Incident Management System (IMS) utilised by the QFRS for all emergency incidents. Regional personnel are trained at various levels of the QFRS Incident Management System (Australian Inter-Service Incident Management System – AIIMS) that includes AIIMS Awareness (4 hours Program), AIIMS/IMS Intermediate Program (16 hours – 2 days Program), and AIIMS/IMS Management (40 hours – 5 day Program).

Experienced and qualified (AIIMS Operations Management) SER regional senior fire officers were allocated command responsibilities as the ROCC Coordinator at regional headquarters, and the ICC/s Incident Controller at Ipswich and Gatton for the duration of the ROCC and ICC/s. Officers undertaking operations functional roles of Planning and Logistics in the ROCC and ICC/s had been trained in AIIMS.

AIIMS administration, reports and templates may be either hard copy or electronic based. The Gatton and Ipswich ICC/s located in the Gatton and Ipswich Fire and Rescue Stations had access to the DCS IT network. Reports were created electronically and forwarded to the ROCC (SER RHQ Beenleigh). The ROCC would action personnel, equipment and appliance logistics, and staff welfare requests by the ICC and advise as these were actioned. ICC reports would be collated into a single whole of region report (situational updates, logistics requests, etc) and forwarded to the QFRS SOCC located at DCS State Office, Kedron Park.

AIIMS incident management system and administrative forms/templates were utilized in coordinating operational planning and logistics support associated with the Flood Disaster incidents and related activities between the 10th and 25th January 2011. Whilst AIIMS worked well, it is acknowledged that the DCS IT network was extended given the work demand on this network from across the region and Queensland. It is also acknowledged that ongoing and regular training be provided to regional personnel in the use of the AIIMS system, administration forms/templates and supporting IT software applications. An AIIMS/IMS Management (40 hours – 5 day) Program has been delivered in April 2011 to ICC Teams in South Eastern Region.

Calls for more personnel: It is suggested that QFRS management did not respond to calls for more personnel, especially swift water technicians, during the flood events:

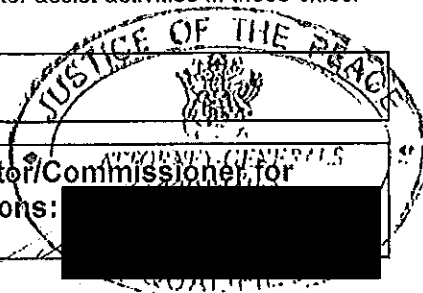
Response: I am unaware of and received no advice that SER Senior Fire Officers did not respond to calls for more personnel, especially swift water technicians during the flood events. I am advised that early on Monday morning 10 January the weather conditions were being monitored, on duty Swift Water Crews (SWR) and with additional SWR resources were being called back to duty and relocated to central and western areas of the region. SWR appliance crews were also located at stations in the Logan and Gold Coast Cities to deal with potential flood water activities in these cities. An additional SWR appliance was mobilized from the QFRS Special Operations Centre, Brisbane and located in Gatton.

On the 10th and 11th January 2011 there were eight QFRS operational special appliances and support vehicles with SWR crews deployed and/or operating in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset LGA areas. An additional two QFRS operational special appliances with SWR crews were also operating in the Gold Coast City and Logan City undertaking swift water rescue and water assist activities in these cities.

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More than forty additional urban and rural fire appliances from QFRS SER fire and rescue stations and rural brigade fire brigade appliances within the Lockyer Valley, Somerset, Ipswich and Scenic Rim LGA/s had also advised their availability on the 10th January, were operational ready and crewed, and supported their local towns and communities during the peak and immediately following the flash flooding and property water inundation, undertaking numerous community water assist and evacuation operations activities.

Trained and available personnel not called: It is suggested that there were a number of trained and available personnel who were not called in to assist while others were working overtime due to lack of personnel:

Response: QFRS South Eastern Region has fifty-one Technical Rescue (TR) Level 2 qualified permanent staff located in three Command stations in the Gold Coast City, Logan City and Ipswich City rostered to provide 10/14 (24 hour) operational coverage for these cities, and the region as a whole. Of these TR staff, forty-four are qualified as Swift Water Rescue Technicians. For the period of the 10th and 11th January, a significant number of these permanent officers were either on duty and/or called back to duty to support operations either in the western localities of the Region or providing operations support in the eastern cities.

Swift Water Rescue crewed special appliances were also deployed from the QFRS Special Operations Centre in Brisbane to the western communities of South Eastern Region undertaking swift water rescue and water assist operations.

Maintaining operational availability of staff to support the swift water incidents that were occurring across the whole of South Eastern Region, and associated fatigue management of those who were operating in the field of operations for greater than their normal shift roster were factors considered. Personnel were called back to duty on overtime (outside their normal shift rosters) and from annual leave.

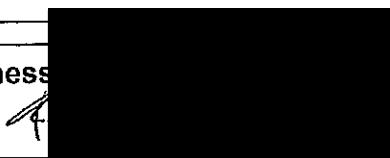
Staff not use effectively: It is suggested that staff were not utilized effectively according to their capabilities:

Response: I am unaware of and received no advice of this allegation. For the period 10th to 25th January, over 1,086 QFRS South Eastern Region personnel (Permanent; Auxiliary and Volunteer Officers/Firefighters, Technical and Administrative Staff) involved in the South Eastern Region Flood Disaster activations (Response, recovery, ICC's, ROCC', Strike Teams, Firecom; Welfare; etc) were involved in multiple operational activations for the initial response and subsequent community recovery activities.

Through my travels across the region and meeting with our ICC Teams at Ipswich and Galton, catching up with crews in the field, discussing recovery activities with Local Government and Police representatives, and brief discussions with local residents in the devastated communities, I have received nothing but excellent feedback on how QFRS has conducted itself and the outstanding community support provided by our volunteers and staff during these most difficult of times. I observed the selfless commitment demonstrated by these crews operating outside their normal functional role, combining the resource strength of our brigades and stations into a single QFRS capability focused on fire and rescue community service delivery.

Rural fire officers tasked to manage response: It is suggested that rural fire officers were tasked to manage aspects of the response without the necessary situational awareness, training and skill sets:

Response: QFRS Rural Operations and Rural Fire Brigade volunteers are an integral part of the QFRS. Over 3,500 SER Rural Fire Brigade volunteer firefighters and 1,110 Rural Fire Brigade appliance

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activations occurred between the 10th and 25th January 2011 supporting initial response and subsequent property recovery and cleanup activities in the communities impacted by the Flash Flooding. QFRS Rural Operations and Rural Fire Brigade officers having an in-depth knowledge of Rural Fire Brigades across South East Region undertook an integral part in coordinating and supporting the whole of region operations response to the Flood Disaster.

It is recognized that Incident Management Teams may require additional support from rural operations and urban operations, external agencies and support staff. The Incident Management Team must be structured on the principle that appointments of personnel to functional positions within the Incident Management Team be based on competence and experience.

Experienced and qualified (AIIIMS Operations Management) QFRS SER regional senior officers were allocated Command responsibilities as the Incident Controllers in the ROCC at regional headquarters, and the ICC/s at Ipswich and Gatton for the duration of the ROCC and ICC/s. Officers undertaking operations functional roles of Planning and Logistics in the ROCC and ICC/s held AIIIMS qualifications.

Rural fire officers experienced and AIIIMS qualified are allocated as members of the predetermined South Eastern Region's ROCC and ICC Teams. These ROCC/ICC Teams undertake training and exercises that are designed to test their capacity to perform within the functional roles within the ROCC and ICC. This training and preparation provides a good foundation should the ROCC/ICC Team be activated to support emergency incidents across the region.

The SER Regional Manager Rural Operations who may be referred to as "a rural fire officer", undertook various ROCC/ICC roles during the Floods Disaster including that of the ICC Incident Controller of the ICC Ipswich on Tuesday 11 January. This officer held the rank of Superintendent (promoted to rank of Chief Superintendent in early May 2011) within the QFRS, and is qualified and experienced in both urban and rural 'All Hazards' operations management.

Training for rescues using helicopters: It is suggested that training needs to be provided for conducting rescues from helicopters:

Response: At approximately 1430 hours Monday 10th January 2011, Air Operations (helicopter air support with winch capability) was requested by QFRS IMT Withcott Incident Controller as appliance crews were reporting that they were unable to reach people trapped on the roof of their residences and/or isolated flooded areas. QFRS SER SWR Level 2 Technicians located in the Lockyer Valley/Somerset areas were requested and/or volunteered to assist as SWR rescue crew for deployed helicopter aircraft and perform Air Operations Rescue (Winch Retrieval) operations activities.

The QFRS Commissioner has directed a review of Swift Water Review to cover all aspects related to training, equipment, numbers of staff training based on regional risk assessments, current procedures, deployments and possible future growth. Review Committee will consider QFRS Technical Rescue Operations capability including rescue activities using helicopter aircraft.

Firecom network overloaded: It is suggested that the Firecom network was overloaded:

Response: The SER Director Regional Operations who has portfolio responsibility for Firecom South East has informed me that whilst there was an increase in work demand for Fire Communications Officers, Firecom South East on the 10 January, 2011 and subsequent days of operations associated with the Floods Disaster operations. He was not aware of any critical major network infrastructure problems.

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An additional two Fire Communications Officers were called back to duty to Firecom South East on the afternoon of Monday, 10 January 2011. An increased (above normal roster) for Firecom South East staffing arrangement was maintained supporting regional operations activities.

SER Firecom South East Manager was available and located in Firecom South East.

Better support and training to deal with post-traumatic stress: It is suggested that better support and training needs to be provided to firefighters to deal with grieving family members and post-traumatic stress disorder:

Response: QFRS Firecare has been available and engaged with regional staff and volunteers from the initial stages of the Floods Disaster. Our Regional Firecare Peer Support Coordinator, Regional/State PSO's and Specialists, and QFRS Chaplains Les Shaw (now retired) and Bob Strong were in the Lockyer Valley and Somerset areas from the 11 January providing support for QFRS personnel and local communities. Firecare support arrangements continue to be provided staff, volunteers and their families who were involved and/or impacted by the events associated with the Floods Disaster.

In relation to swift water rescue:

Issue raised in UFU transcript: That there are insufficient numbers of personnel trained as Level Two Swift Water Rescue Technicians:

Response: QFRS South Eastern Region has fifty-one Technical Rescue (TR) Level 2 qualified permanent staff located in three Command stations in the Gold Coast City, Logan City and Ipswich City rostered to provide 10/14 (24 hour) operational coverage for these cities, and the region as a whole. Of these TR staff, forty-four are qualified as Swift Water Rescue Technicians. For the period of the 10th and 11th January, a significant number of these permanent officers were either on duty and/or called back to duty to support operations either in the western localities of the Region or providing operations support in the eastern cities.

The QFRS Commissioner has directed a review of Swift Water Review to cover all aspects related to training, equipment, numbers of staff training based on regional risk assessments, current procedures, deployments and possible future growth. Review Committee will consider QFRS Technical Rescue Operations capability including rescue activities using helicopter aircraft.

Insufficient numbers of SWR trained personnel to perform rescues: It is suggested that as a result of insufficient personnel, swift water rescues were performed with inadequate numbers of firefighters or with assistance from firefighters without the requisite training:

Response: On Monday 10 January, station and brigade personnel in their small towns and communities whilst not only endeavoring to keep their families safe, assisted friends and neighbours in their hour of need. QFRS SER appliance crews and Swift Water Teams were mobilised to the region's western towns and communities, supporting local brigade/station crews and together worked tirelessly in extremely challenging and dangerous situations. Undoubtedly this collective effort during the initial stages of this devastating event by local stations and brigades, and the additional appliance crews mobilized assisted in saving lives.

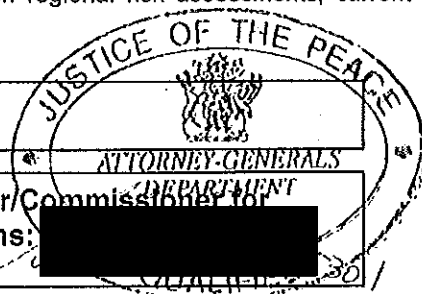
SWR training for auxiliary and rural firefighters: It is suggested that auxiliary and rural firefighters need to be trained in swift water rescue beyond awareness level:

Response: The QFRS Commissioner has directed a review of Swift Water Review to cover all aspects related to training, equipment, numbers of staff training based on regional risk assessments, current procedures, deployments and possible future growth.

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As part of this QFRS Swift Water Review I have directed through the SER Director Regional Operations for the SER Regional Technical Rescue Coordinator to undertake a review of SER regional SWR arrangements, including a regional risk assessment and recommendation of station personnel training and equipment resourcing. Review information from this regional SWR review will be provided for consideration to the QFRS State Committee undertaking this whole of State review.

SWR training is not pragmatic: It is suggested that training and approach to Swift Water Rescue is not pragmatic:

Response: I regularly reinforce with regional personnel and their respective Union representatives my commitment to the consistent application of QFRS policy, systems and practice, including those associated with Swift Water Rescue (a State standard approach to delivering services). Although State Policy forms the basis for delivering frontline operations, however a practical application to developing staff core skills and competency maintenance is always encouraged. For example, in South Eastern Region SWR Level 2 Technicians are encouraged to participate in practical swift water training at available venues such as Wet and Wild, Gold Coast and other venues as identified and coordinated by the SER Regional Technical Rescue Coordinator. Additionally, for the past few years SWR Level 2 Technicians are also programmed to participate in annual training on the Tully River, North Queensland.

In relation to equipment:

Non-water resistant portable radios impacting on communications: It is suggested that firefighters, including swift water rescue technicians, were given non-water resistant portable radios and were unable to communicate:

Response: The current QFRS radios are water resistant and operate effectively in most wet conditions. While they are not fully water-proof, SER has purchased a number of water proof bags for portable radios to support swift water environments.

Shortage of rescue equipment: It is suggested that there is a shortage of equipment for rescues:

Response: In South Eastern Region there are ten Swift Water Rescue Cache/s that are available and located at the Robina, Beenleigh and Ipswich Fire and Rescue Stations. These stations are also the location for SER Technical Rescue special appliances and SWR qualified officers and firefighters. During major weather events this regional SWR cache/s is utilized in supporting the region resourcing of ten appliances with Swift Water Rescue capability as required.

Insufficient equipment for flood waters and swift water rescues: It is suggested that there is insufficient equipment for flood waters and swift water rescues, such as swift water boats, appropriate vehicles with flood lights installed, and water rescue protective clothing:

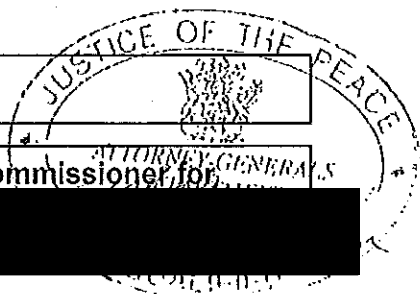
Response: In addition to the ten regional SWR cache/s, the region has three x Inflatable Work Platforms (IWP's) for use in swift water operations. These IWP's are designed to reduce the risk to technicians and casualties and can be used in conjunction with SWR rope systems. SER ordered three additional IWP's in February 2011 and these are expected to be delivered in late May. Additional IWP's are located to support surge capacity at the QFRS Special Operations, Brisbane.

To ensure that QFRS rescue technicians have all necessary equipment to perform rescues as needed, SER has provided regional SWR Level 2 officers with their own Personal Protective Equipment ("PPE") including safety helmet, wetsuit, Personal Flotation Device ("PFD") complete with knife and strobe, headlamp and booties.

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All urban and auxiliary appliances (fire fighting vehicles) are equipped with work lighting systems as well as both portable and fixed flood lighting systems. In addition, all State Swift Water deployment cache/s contain a high powered torch for scene lighting and search capability.

In relation to volunteers outside the QFRS structure:

No capacity to manage external volunteers: It is suggested that QFRS has no capacity to manage external volunteers and so could not take full advantage of potential assistance, and that the QFRS has no capacity to follow up with community volunteers who render assistance:

Response: Under the Disaster Management arrangements, the Local Disaster Management Group is responsible for the coordination and utilization of volunteers and this does not fall within the scope of QFRS.

Reflection on the events:

The significant nature of the Flood Disaster and the impact on communities across south-east Queensland, and the subsequent large number of QFRS South Eastern Region personnel and resources activated over a fifteen day period, demonstrates the benefits of good planning and preparation, coordinated response, and Command/Leadership/Management at all levels. QFRS Operations Doctrine as the Fire and Rescue Service state-wide approach to emergency response and incident management works.

Areas of regional operations that went well and should continue:

- Interaction and cooperation demonstrated between fire and rescue station, and rural fire brigade personnel "One service focus on delivering front line operations";
- Utilising the 2010/2011 Regional SWR Operational Plan as a guide for forward planning for preparing and relocating appropriate QFRS SER resources;
- Self populating IMS forms available in the SER ROCC worked well and save considerable time retyping information;
- In addition to formal programmed reporting from the ROCC to SOCC, reporting by exception provided good information on operations activities from Region to State on as a required basis;
- Good communications between the Regional Fire Commander and State Fire Commander providing updates on changing circumstances, operations and forward planning/support arrangements;
- Appointing and locating experienced Senior Fire Officers into the Incident Coordination Centres providing strong leadership and directions in operations;
- Quarantined folders within SER RHQ regional server to ensure data is secure;
- Locating Firecare Peer Support Officers, QFRS Chaplin and physiologist/s into the IMT structure early and for an extended period of time;
- Locating a Technical Rescue officer into the SER ROCC/ICC and Local Disaster Management Group during the early phase of operations providing information on QFRS Technical Rescue capability and resourcing (SER ROCC, ICC/s Gatton and Ipswich);
- Appointing and locating QFRS SER officers into the Local/District Disaster Management Groups focused on building relationship and reinforcing capability of the QFRS to support operations planning and tasking coordination support;
- Concept of deployable SER RIMT cache/s worked well where IMT's are deployed early. Set up time can be problematic when incident is in full operation, however the deployable capability rather than a static location ensures the ICC is correctly geographical located;

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- Identifying targets of opportunity during the property assist and cleanup operations activities and utilizing building Rapid Damage Assessment data assisted with the planning and coordinating SER Strike Teams with property recovery and clean up activities;
- Establishing a dedicated planning and coordination SER ROCC Cell to contact, assemble, brief and dispatch multiple station/brigade Task Force/Strike Teams (considering the numbers activated 14th to 25th January 2011) proved an efficient management arrangement;
- Maintaining good relationships with local district and regional Queensland Police Service officers ensuring an understanding of QFRS operations capability;
- Collation of data on operations activities of the ROCC/ICC on a daily basis for later reference;
- Establishing the Regional Data Retrieval Team (independent of their normal day to day functions) experienced in Project Management; Operations (Urban and Rural); IT database applications; Administration;
- Community leadership demonstrated and provided by the QFRS Officers-in-Charge of the stations and brigades when there was not other immediately available whole of Government and/or Agency presence in the isolated communities during the peak flooding and property water inundation.

Areas of regional operations to be considered to enhance operations:

- Increase the number of regional personnel available and qualified in AIIMS/IMS Management (40 hours – 5 days Program) to compliment the existing SER ROCC/ICC Teams;
- Continue with ongoing joint training programs and exercises for permanent, auxiliary and volunteers in the application and use of AIIMS for major emergency incident management.
- Provide permanent, auxiliary and volunteers regular training in the application and use of the IMS IT applications (Elap and IMS Form/s applications);

AIIMS/IMS Management (40 hours – 5 days Program) scheduled and delivered (1st AIIMS Training Refresher – 4 to 8 April) to SER ROCC/ICC regional personnel as part of their professional competency maintenance activities, building on their experiences gained as members of ROCC/ICC's during Flood Disaster (Gold Coast Zone: Completed). Additional AIIMS/IMS Management Programs being programmed for personnel from West Moreton Zone.

IMS IT applications (Elap and IMS Form/s applications) scheduled for ROCC/ICC team members.

SER Manager Professional Development Command meeting with the SER Assistant Commissioner, Director Regional Operations and Director Regional Development to finalise the SER Regional Training Calendar for the period 2011/2012 on 26 May 2011.

- Enhance the competencies of all SER Senior Fire Officers in the use and application of the QFRS Operating Management System (OMS) use to allocate and track personnel for deployment during major operations incidents, and support station Officers-in-Charge in day to day station/shift planning and activities;

OMS Refresher (2 Day Course) training delivered to SER Senior Fire Officers in April 2011 and additional one day activities planned for Year 2011.

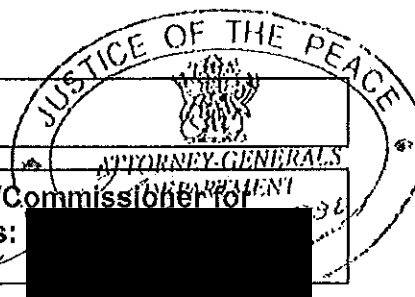
- A review/upgrade of SER ROCC/ICC equipment and Cache/s be undertaken by the SER Duty Manager Operations and Information Technology Officer in preparations for future seasonal events (E.G. Bushfire season 2011; Wet Season end 2011; etc);

Review/upgrade progressing in preparations for the 2011 Bushfire Season.

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- Similar to QFRS USAR Taskforce deployments, regional ROCC/ICC operations debriefings to be formalised as an integral element prior to the end of ROCC/ICC deployment arrangements (and not to be scheduled at a date to be determined) prior to deployed staff returning to their region and/or regional normal operations function;

To be included in the 2011/2012 Regional Operational Plan (under review and draft to be prepared by 30 May 2011)

- For protracted QFRS operations (SOCC/ROCC/ICC/etc) supporting major disaster events, consider the duration that personnel are appointed to a functional role within the SER ROCC/ICC.

To be included in the 2011/2012 Regional Operational Plan (under review and draft to be prepared by 30 May 2011)

- Schedule a day aside in the SER ROCC/ICC deployment duration to be included for operations cell functionality 'handovers' where the new rostered officer works (hand in hand) with the current officer on the activities associated with that role;

To be included in the 2011/2012 Regional Operational Plan (under review and draft to be prepared by 30 May 2011)

- Continue to strengthen and maintain consistent relationships with LDMG Local Disaster Coordinators (CQFRS directive) provided by the local QFRS Area Commander;

SER Senior Fire Officers appointed to the new regional Headquarters and Command positions (Included in the QFRS Senior Officer Review) have been nominated and appointed as QFRS regional representatives to Local and District Disaster Management Groups.

- Ensure that the Region has established arrangements to forward deploy necessary QFRS Senior Officer/s to undertake Operations Command thereby not impacting on the local Area Commander/s role within the LDMG;

To be included in the 2011/2012 Regional Operational Plan (under review and draft to be prepared by 30 May 2011)

- Review QFRS Technical Rescue Operations capability to include Rescue activities using helicopter aircraft;
- Reconsider QFRS Fleet Profiles with a focus on the stowage and transport of 'Inflated' swift water craft (working platforms). With multiple Swift Water Rescue events, inflating and deflating the craft between rescue event sites is problematic and time consuming;
- The review of QFRS Technical Rescue to consider alignment of community risk and incident frequency historical data, to required operational front line service delivery and the professional development/skills competency maintenance program activity for personnel (permanent, auxiliary and volunteer);

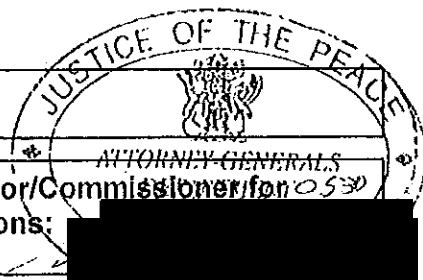
Part of the SER Regional Swift Water Rescue Review and QFRS State Swift Water Rescue Review process.

- Strengthen communications between ICC/s and ROCC through developing and implementing audio/visual technological capability (ICC Comms/Cache) to support regular and efficient operations briefings;

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Audio visual communications (Movi) currently being installed on all QFRS SER Senior Fire Officer Laptop computers by SER IT Officer.

- Build electronic data recording capacity into the regional ROCC to support operations data collation, governance and retrieval;

Research being undertaken by the SER IT Officer on best options to install prior to the 2011 Bushfire Season.

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(6C)(c)(i)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

(1) This written statement by me dated 9 May 2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 21 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

Signed at Beenleigh this 9th day of May 2011

This is page 21 of a statement comprising 21 page/s.

Witness:

JP/Solicitor/Commissioner for
Declarations:

