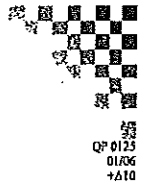




QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE  
STATEMENT OF WITNESS



Occurrence #: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement no.: 1 Date: 28/01/2011

**Statement of**

Name of witness: CRIGHTON, David Robert

Date of birth: [REDACTED] Age: [REDACTED] Occupation: Firefighter - Swift water rescue level 2

**Police officer taking statement**

Name of police officer: FISHBOURNE, Daniel

Rank: Constable Reg. no.: 22006

Region/Command/Division: Toowoomba Station: Toowoomba Station

**Statement:**

1. My name is David Robert CRIGHTON and I reside at [REDACTED] I have lived at this address for nearly 14 years.

2. My mobile phone number is [REDACTED] and my home phone number is [REDACTED]

3. I am a permanent fire fighter and have been so since 2004, before that I was an auxiliary fire fighter in Pittsworth since 1994.

4. I am also qualified swift water rescue technician and have been qualified since July last year. I am required to carry a pager. All qualified swift water rescue technicians are on-call.

5. I recall the events that occurred on the 10<sup>th</sup> day of January 2011.

6. I was due to start work at 5pm that day; however I received a call from Comms at about quarter to 2pm. They said they had rescues so I started ringing around getting other technicians to mobilise and head to the station.


[REDACTED]  
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)


[REDACTED]  
(Police officer's signature)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: CRIGHTON, David Robert

7. I then grabbed my gear and drove from my home in Pittsworth to Toowoomba.
8. I came into town along Anzac Avenue and turned right into Herries Street. When I got to the corner of Herries and Clifford Streets I could see the water was over the road and I knew that I wouldn't be able to make it across there so I turned left into Clifford Street and then right into Margaret Street.
9. The water was the same but the appliance, call sign 311A, was parked down near the waterline on the corner of Dent and Margaret Streets.
10. I drove down there and got out of my ute and went and looked at what was going on. I saw 4 Fire fighters in the water preparing to conduct a swift water rescue. There was also an inspector present.
11. These officers are Stuart DUNDAS, Shaun BEARD, Shane OTT and a swift water rescue technician John RYAN, and an Inspector Bruce SMITH.
12. I also saw a male Caucasian, dark hair. He was around 30 or 35 years old. He was hanging on to the last tree before the zebra crossing on the eastern side of Dent Street.
13. I observed that the fire fighters had a line out to him in what's called a "ferry angle". The male on the other side had managed to tie the rope to the tree that he was hanging on to.
14. I then proceeded back to my ute and got changed into my wetsuit and PFD.
15. When I came back I saw that the other technician was down stream of the male.

  
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

  
(Police officer's signature)

**CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: CRIGHTON, David Robert**

16. The other fire fighters assisted me in tying the rope off on the western side of Dent Street in what is known as a "Ferry angle" getting across the water using the rope the male had tied to his tree.

17. When I was about 8 or so feet from the male the water was way too strong and pushed my legs out from under me. I was clipped to the rope so I was I knew I wasn't going to be washed away.

18. I couldn't get my feet back down onto the road so I pulled myself along the rope with my hands. Because of the ferry angle the rope, the water pressure helps you get along the rope.

19. The only way I could breathe was to roll onto my back, lift my head. This creates a small pocket of air around your face allowing you to breathe. I then rolled back onto my stomach and kept going.

20. When I got to the male the only way I could stand up was to manoeuvre around the male and try to stand up in what's called the "eddy" which is the dead water behind an object.

21. There was only a small "eddy" as the tree the male was standing behind was quite small.

22. I said "what's your name?"

23. He said his name was "Eddie"

24. I said "how'd you get here"

25. He said he thought he'd seen some people in a car and was going to help them when the water caught him. He was quite distressed. I didn't ask him anything further as it wasn't the place.



(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)



(Police officer's signature)

**CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: CRIGHTON, David Robert**

26. I was going to make a harness for Eddie out of some "rescue tape" however the other fire fighters had managed to put a life jacket on the rope. The ferry angle and pressure of the water pushed the life jacket straight to me.

27. I took the life jacket off the rope and put it on Eddie and then I explained to him what was going to happen and what I needed him to do.

28. I then clipped myself to the tree and got the fire fighters to untie the rope on their side and create a new "ferry angle".

29. This new angle would allow the water pressure to push Eddie and I down the rope to the western side of Dent Street.

30. I grabbed Eddie and pushed us off towards the western side of Dent Street. I did this to clear a sign which was slightly down stream from us as I didn't want to get caught up in it. As the water took us, I expected to be pulled up as I was clipped to the safety line but somehow the clip had come undone and we were washed downstream.


31. Somehow we were washed out of the main flow of the water and were washed into a car; I used my legs to stop us against the car.

32. The other swift water rescue technician was able to walk to us and grab onto us.

33. Eddie and I then used the technician's line to get back to safety while he waited at the car. Once we were out of the water he came back.

34. From there both I and the other technician started to check the cars that we could see in the water.

35. There were 4 cars from memory. We checked them and put Police tape on them to indicate they had been searched.

  
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

  
(Police officer's signature)

36. From there we went back to Kitchener Street station and I was put onto another truck where we continued to search other vehicles for persons.

37. When we were finished searching vehicles we went to the Kitchener Street station and then on to the Anzac Avenue Station to organise what we would do if another storm hit.

38. By now it was about 7pm so I commenced normal duties.

39. While I was on holidays Eddie's mum, Jackie, rang the station and left her details. I then called her back on the 28<sup>th</sup> day of January 2011 and we had a conversation. She then provided me with Eddie's details. His name is Edward SPARKS and his phone number is [REDACTED] Jackie's number is [REDACTED]

40. On the 28<sup>th</sup> day of January 2011 I attended the Toowoomba Police station and made this statement to Constable Daniel FISHBOURNE of my own free will

[REDACTED]

David CRIGHTON

**Justices Act Acknowledgement**

**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 28/01/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 5 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false.

[REDACTED]

Signature

Signed at Toowoomba this 28<sup>th</sup> day of January 2011.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Police officer's signature)