

<i>Name of Witness</i>	Ian Robert HEGARTY
<i>Date of Birth</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Address and contact details</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Occupation</i>	Retired
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Detective Senior Sergeant Mark Reid
<i>Date taken</i>	3 March 2011

Ian Robert HEGARTY states:

1. I am a married man, [REDACTED] years of age and currently live at [REDACTED] Spring Bluff. We own a property that consists of about 8 hectares.
2. We had experienced some minor flooding at our property over December 2010 and January 2011. On 27 December 2010 the water in Murphys Creek rose enough to cover our driveway cutting us off from the main road. This occurred again on 8 and 9 January 2011.
3. I am not sure who the local disaster co-ordinator is, but if I have any problems I can contact the Rural Fire Services or the Gatton Council.
4. On 10 January 2011 I was involved in the heavy flooding of Murphys Creek. We were home on the day and had had the causeway at home flooded 4 times during December 2010 and January 2011. Due to the intensity of the rain the ground in our area was saturated. This resulted in the heavy rain we received in our area going straight into the creek. The creek rose 12 feet during the flood but we did not get any water into the house. I have not seen anything like this flood since we purchased the property in 1993.

Witness Signature [REDACTED]

Signature of officer [REDACTED]

Exhibit Number:

157

QFCI

Date:

28/4/11

JWR

Warning

5. At no time did we receive any warning regarding the creek rising any higher than normal. I do not think there would have been time for any warnings to be delivered to the Spring Bluff community. We lost telephone contact at the time of the incident as our telephone were cut by the water. We still had contact via the ABC radio to receive information. The radio is the best option to receive warnings for any future rain events and the information needs to be clearly explained so that people understand the warning. Often people cannot interpret the weather information as it relates to their area.
6. People within the community were left to their own devices for flood preparations. We have never received any briefings or plans from local or State Government.

Response

7. I cannot comment on the response of the Emergency Services as I did not see any of the services for 8 days. Due to the creek damage we could not safely cross from our side of the creek to the road as the causeway on our property had been washed out. I put a sign up on our side of the creek on the road stating '*5.00pm 10/1 no phone, no power, we're okay*'. This let everyone know our status and stopped people wasting time in trying to get to us. The police checked all of the addresses on our road and my neighbours had told them we were okay. I think that this was only thing that the Emergency Services could do in the initial stages of the incident.
8. We received a lot of volunteer support on 18 January 2011 from the Gold Coast volunteers. On the 13th January, 2011 I hooked up the telephone at home myself. On 19th January, 2011 with the assistance of the volunteers, they helped me put a pole back up to hook the line back up in a more permanent situation.


Witness Signature

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Signature of officer

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9. Gerry Keogh used his private business excavators and bobcats to open the causeway back up to our house. The rock and gravel were bought in by Vanderfield with the free use of his trucks to transport it to our property. My first contact with the SES was on 19 January 2011.
10. Centrelink was good regarding the \$1000 assistance package. I did not see any Government agencies, and the remainder of the assistance we received was from volunteer services.
11. We did receive a number of health warnings regarding water clarity and waterborne disease as a result of the storm on the ABC radio. These warnings were effective for me as a local resident.
12. The community response was great with the community pulling together. I cannot comment on other influences. I had no TV broadcasts and very little contact with people generally. Our phone lines were down for 3 days. Our first personal contact with Telstra was on 18 January 2011. We did not have any power for 3 weeks 4 days due to problems with the installation of power poles. The ground was too wet to have the poles reinstalled. We did not have any communications with the outside world once the flood started. I did have access to a UHF radio where I managed to contact a truck driver in Mt Kynoch near Toowoomba, who in turn got in contact with my son Robert Hegarty in Toowoomba to let him know we were safe.
13. The information that the ABC was broadcasting to the community regarding road closures, evacuation points and food/water was very good. The information was informative and helped reduce the isolation my wife and I were feeling.

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Recovery

14. I would describe the recovery process as slow. Many people need more work in cleaning up their properties. The response was prioritised but the authorities needed to keep the residents briefed.
15. Road access within the area was not good due to extensive damage. Apart from the volunteers in the area repairing roads, the Government Agencies did nothing that I could see...
16. The updates regarding the recovery process were done primarily on the ABC radio. On 22 January 2011 I received a flyer in the letter box stating that provisions and medical assistance was available at the Murphys Creek Tavern. We did not receive any resources from the government other than that which we received from volunteers.

Insurance

17. We suffered very little loss from the flood. We suffered some paddock damage, the loss of a couple of pumps and polypipe.
18. I am currently insured with Suncorp and as far as I know we will be able to recover the losses we have had. The signs have been encouraging, and Suncorp was requested that we get quotes. We are yet to be paid.
19. I think that emergency services were overwhelmed with the magnitude of this incident.

- 20. No one had ever dealt with such a situation like this one before and they did their best they could in the circumstances.

- 21. I recall in 1969 – 1970 I was in the Australian Capital Territory Police Communications Centre during a major flood event in Canberra. My duties entailed radio communication with rescue personnel on the road. Our Inspectors were in the building managing the allocation and direction of resources, they were not out on the road directing traffic or placing sandbags. I also recall in 1974 following Cyclone Tracey I was sent to Darwin to assist with the response and recovery of that area. At that stage I was a member of the Australian Capital Territory Police. In Darwin I worked under the direction of Major General Stretton who was appointed the recovery co-ordinator for this disaster. This recovery operation centred around the establishment of a Central Operations Command Post in which Major General Stretton remained. He was in the position to effectively direct, co-ordinate and manage resources as required.

- 22. In my opinion in relation to the flood events in the Lockyer Valley on the 10th January, 2011 I believe that the people in authority in the Local Council in a position to make decisions in relation to the allocation of resources should be at a central command post where they can be contacted at all times to make those decisions. To do otherwise as being in tractors or pulling logs off roads for example, reduces their value to the community to that of a single labourer. I believe that they would be of greater value to the community being in the central command post managing resources.

Witness Signature
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[Redacted Signature]

Signature of officer

[Redacted Signature]

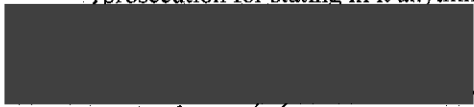
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I R HEGARTY

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 25/4/11 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 6 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 Bowen this 28 day of April 2011

Witness Signature..... Signature of officer.....
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