

  
BRISBANE Q. 4001

Dear Sir/Madam

Dorothea Mackellar superbly encapsulated the very essence and being of Australia, in her epic poem "My Country", first published in 1908.

She refers to the extreme contrasts of Australia, 'droughts and flooding rains'. Yet, 103 years have passed and we have done very little to counteract these contrasts!

The following are concise statements of my thoughts in relation to the Queensland floods, and one would hope that the Independent Commission of Inquiry will also be concise in their findings, instead of producing very costly bureaucratic reams and reams of paper in a misguided attempt to justify their relevance to the public.

These are my thoughts in question form:

- Why haven't sand bags been stockpiled in strategic locations around the state?
- Why haven't sewerage and water treatment plants been protected by levee banks?
- Why are levee banks around towns not based on a minimum of 1 in 200 year flood levels and why do flood prone towns not have effectual levee banks in place?
- Why is there a total lack of secure and safe evacuation centres around the state?
- Why was Wivenhoe Dam allowed to reach an extremely dangerous capacity level and what would appear to be an unsynchronized disbursement of water into Wivenhoe Dam from Somerset Dam? It really was a stroke of luck that Brisbane didn't end up in the middle of Morton Bay. All government media reports on the Wivenhoe situation stated 'we are doing it by the book/operations manual', and therein lies the problem, all red tape and no Common Sense.
- Why were dam levels in south east Queensland not listed on the website on Wednesday 12<sup>th</sup> January, for the public to view?
- Why was Volunteering Queensland totally unprepared and unable to coordinate volunteers?
- Why are our landline and mobile telephone communication systems unable to handle emergency situations?

I'm happy for my comments to be fully published.

Sincerely 

Stephen Penberthy

# Address and telephone contact details are on my Cover Sheet