

QUEENSLAND FLOOD ENQUIRY SUBMISSION, DATED 18 APRIL 2011.

I believe that prior to the wet season arriving in La Nina years, all dam water levels in the possibly to be rain-affected areas of Queensland must be reduced to at least 60% of their storage capacity, in expectation of very heavy rain falling in their catchment areas. This level should be maintained as much as possible until the latter part of that wet season, when they could be allowed to rise to full or near full capacity, in readiness for the following dry season. I also believe that prior to non-La Nina year wet seasons, the above strategy should be followed for these dams, but with a reduction of all dam water levels to at least 75% of their storage capacity.

The percentage of water reduction in each dam prior to the wet season arriving would be determined, by qualified staff, from historical records, &, from local knowledge etc. The main thing to take into account though would be to assume "maximum worst case" water inflow volumes to each dam, &, assume that flooding will occur downstream of each dam even though no water is being released from each dam.

These measures would allow dam operators to have much more ability to prevent or reduce downstream flooding by giving them a much better flood mitigation ability.

I make this submission because approximately 4 to 6 weeks ago I heard on a "Rural Report" that was broadcast at 1.04pm on radio station 4KZ at Innisfail, an item which stated that a Queensland Farmers' Association had contacted the Chief Officer at a Queensland Water Company, complaining about the non-release of dam water prior to the well advertised predicted,(on the B.o.M.'s website etc.), severe La Nina wet season that was due to occur within the next several months. They also complained to the Water Company about extremely heavy crop & stock losses etc. that had been incurred due to the release of dam water while floods were occurring downstream of dams.

This radio report stated that the Chief Officer wrote back to the Farmers' Association, stating that the Water Company did not own the water in their dams, but it was owned by the people of Queensland, &, because of this the Company would not release water from the dams prior to the arrival of the wet season.

I assume that this radio station report was accurate, & I assume that the radio station would have full details of the date, &, the contents of that broadcast. I don't recall who the Chief Officer was, or, the name of the Farmers' Association mentioned in this "Rural Report."

When I heard this radio report, I believed that the Water Company, as a matter of policy, had been maintaining maximum dam water levels without regard for their greatly reduced ability to use their dams for flood mitigation purposes, no matter what the weather forecasts were.

In the 1960s I worked for two years on the Snowy Mountains Hydro Electric Scheme.

Kind regards,

Alan Heath.

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