

**QFCI**

Date: 13/05/11 Jm

Exhibit Number: 386

**STATEMENT OF WITNESS**

Prepared by: Legal Services Unit

Prepared by: Legal Services Unit

Date: 4 May 2011

Name of Witness: Peta Louise Miller

Address of Witness: [REDACTED] Beenleigh QLD, 4207

Occupation: Public Servant

Position: Mitigation and Education Officer

**STATEMENT OF PETA MILLER**

I, Peta Louise Miller of [REDACTED] Beenleigh in the State of Queensland, Mitigation and Education Officer (South East – Region) Rural Operations, for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, state as follows:-

1. I have been a Rural Fire Service ("RFA") volunteer since 2001 and an auxiliary fire fighter since 2005.
2. I have been employed by the Department of Community Safety ("DCS") since 2008, commencing as a Brigade Training and Support Officer until being promoted to my current role in August 2010.
3. Prior to working for DCS I worked in the health care industry in variety of roles including nursing and occupational health and safety positions.
4. I have seen a copy of a letter dated 9 April 2011 from the Executive Officer, Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry, to Crown Law requiring a response which is attachment PM-01 and which details the topics my response should cover.

This is page 1 of a statement comprising 5 page/s.

Witness [REDACTED]

~~JP/Lawyer/Commissioner for~~  
Declarations: [REDACTED]

5. **Item 1: Management had seen footage on the news of flooding in Grantham on 8 January 2011 and saw the rural fire truck driving through flood waters.**

- (a) I was acting in the role of Area Director for the period from 4 January 2011 to 23 January 2011;
- (b) I received an email dated 10 January 2011 from Peter Hollier (Acting Director - Rural Operations) who advised me of an incident in Grantham the previous evening where two fire fighters had been stranded in flood waters (in a Fire-Fighting Appliance) and required rescuing by swift water rescue technicians. A copy of that email dated 10 January 2011 is **annexed and marked "PM-02"**;
- (c) I then spoke with Acting Regional Manager (Craig Smith) and advised of the email that I had received from Mr Hollier. Craig then instructed me to contact Ms Jamieson (as the first officer of the brigade) to obtain a report regarding the incident.
- (d) I had a telephone conversation with Ms Jamieson on the morning of 10 January 2011 (rather than 9 January 2011). **Annexed and marked "PM-03"** is a diary note I made on 10 January 2011;
- (e) The purpose of the call was to check that she was "OK" and to obtain a report regarding the incident as requested by the acting Director and acting Regional Manager.
- (f) I asked Ms Jamieson if she was ok and also asked her to explain the circumstances leading up to the appliance being washed off the road and the subsequent rescue of herself and another fire fighter by swift water rescue technicians.
- (g) Ms Jamieson advised that she was ok but that she was tired. She also advised she could not answer why the appliance was driven through flood waters as she was not driving the appliance at the time;
- (h) I then advised her that we would need to complete a report but that this could wait until she was rested.
- (i) I also had a general conversation with Ms Jamieson about safety including the risks of driving appliances through flood waters;
- (j) I then liaised with the Acting Regional-Manager (Craig Smith) who advised that in light of those events, I should direct each of the Brigade Training and Support Officers ("BTSOs") to liaise with each rural brigade and remind them of safety considerations during flooding events.

This is page 2 of a statement comprising 5 page/s.

Witness (.

JP/Lawyer/Commissioner for  
Declarations:

- (k) At approximately 11am on 10 January 2011, I issued a direction to the BTSOs to contact their respective brigades and discuss:
  - (i) The importance of directing the members of the public to the appropriate response agency, e.g. the SES for non-urgent flood related matters and '000' for urgent requests and emergencies.
  - (ii) That it was important for Rural Brigades to log all activities with FireCom, irrespective of whether they were responding to an event or carrying out reconnaissance within their community.
  - (iii) The dangers of driving appliances through flooded roadways, causeways or other flood waters.

6. **Item 2: That the fire vehicles are not to be driven through flood waters and are only for fighting fires.**

- (a) I directed the BTSO to deliver the message as outlined in paragraph 2, item (k);
- (b) This position is correct from my understanding; and
- (c) Paul Adcock - Director (Rural Operations) confirmed that this is correct generally from the QFRS perspective.

7. **Item 3: That the rural fire brigade is only to react if activated by the State Emergency Services (SES) to assist and not to self respond.**

- (a) I directed the BTSO to deliver the message as outlined in paragraph 2, item (k);
- (b) Paul Adcock and I agreed that this proposition is generally correct but requires some context;
- (c) Generally speaking, the prohibition against 'self-responding' does not prevent a Rural Fire Brigade from responding to an emergency situation;
- (d) What is required is that a Rural Brigade should liaise with FireCom to advise of what activities they are undertaking and should only perform tasks that are within their training e.g. members of Rural Fire Brigades should not conduct water rescues or perform flood boat operations etc; and
- (e) Providing the above conditions are met, it would not be considered 'self-responding' if members of a rural fire brigade provide assistance to a member of the public.

This is page 3 of a statement comprising 5 page/s.

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| Witness ( [REDACTED] ) | JP/Lawyer/Commissioner for Declarations: [REDACTED] |
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8. **Item 4: If the rural fire brigade receive calls for assistance to advise callers to contact the SES on phone number 132500.**

- (a) I directed the BTSO to deliver the message as outlined in paragraph 2, item (k);
- (b) Paul Adcock and I agreed that this proposition is generally correct but required some context;
- (c) Generally, if a Rural Fire Brigade receives calls for assistance for matters that are outside of their responsibility, e.g. storm damage to a home, they are directed to refer the person making the report to the appropriate response agency, e.g. the SES for storm damage, 000 for a medical emergency etc; and
- (d) While Rural Operations and I agree generally with the content of the material, I cannot recall having that conversation with Ms Jamieson myself, nor do I know who may have had that conversation.

9. **Related conversation with Group Officer Stuart Damrow on Sunday 9 January 2011.**

- (a) While not directly related to the matters outlined in the Commission's request, I had a conversation with Stuart Damrow on Sunday 9 January 2011.
- (b) He telephoned me on the afternoon of 9 January 2011 and advised that he had heard that a few of the Gatton Brigades had been attending to community requests.
- (c) He investigated this further and advised that there were only three SES members available in the area and for this reason the Brigades had been rendering assistance to the community.
- (d) In response to his comments, I advised him of the importance of reporting non-urgent calls for assistance through the SES to ensure that they were aware of the need for further SES crews in the Grantham area.
- (e) At the conclusion of the call, Stuart advised that he would put out a group page advising volunteer members of the importance of making appropriate referrals to the SES.
- (f) I then contacted Regional Manager (Craig Smith) to update him of my conversation with Stuart and Craig advised that no further action was required at this time.

This is page 4 of a statement comprising 5 page/s.

Witness (

JP/Lawyer/Commissioner for  
Declarations:

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 4 May 2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 8 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.

..... [Redacted] ..... Signature

Signed at Brisbane this 3rd day of May 2011

This is page 5 of a statement comprising 5 page/s.

Witness (

JP/Lawyer/Commissioner for  
Declarations: [Redacted]

PM-01

Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

Our ref: Doc 1672006

9 April 2011

Mr Paul Lack  
Assistant Crown Solicitor  
Crown Law  
Department of Justice and Attorney-General  
GPO Box 5221  
BRISBANE QLD 4001

Dear Mr Lack

Ms Peta Miller was an area brigade training and support officer for Rural Operations in the Ipswich Area as at 9 and 10 January 2011.

As an employee of Rural Operations for the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service, under the umbrella of the Department of Emergency Services, we understand Ms Miller is represented by Crown Law.

We have received a statement from a rural firefighter in Grantham, Ms Vivienne Ann Jamieson, who provides evidence that she had a telephone conversation with Ms Miller on 9 January 2011 to the effect that:

1. management had seen footage on the news of flooding in Grantham on 8 January 2011 and saw the rural fire truck driving through flood waters;
2. that the fire vehicles are not to be driven through flood waters and are only for fighting fires;
3. that the rural fire brigade is only to react if activated by State Emergency Services (SES) to assist and not to self respond
4. If the rural fire brigade receive calls for assistance to advise callers to contact the SES on phone number 132 500.

We seek you to obtain Ms Miller's instructions as to whether she recalls that conversation and whether she agrees with the content; who is 'management' as referred to in point 1; and who authorised her to give these directions to Ms Jamieson.

Evidence of this conversation may be ventilated in the hearings scheduled for Toowoomba and we require instructions be obtained from Ms Miller and the person who authorised this direction and their reason for doing so in writing to properly inform the Commission prior to the Toowoomba hearing dates.

CK  
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Please contact Ms Kate Juhasz of this office on telephone [REDACTED] with any queries.

Yours sincerely

[REDACTED]

Janis Moynihan  
Executive Officer

ck  
pmw

**Courtney Kelm**

**From:** Peta Miller  
**Sent:** Thursday, 14 April 2011 11:32 AM  
**To:** Courtney Kelm  
**Subject:** FW: Commissioner's Notifiable Incident Report

as requested

**Peta Miller-Rose**  
Mitigation and Education Officer  
South East Region

Rural Operations  
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service  
32 Tansey Street, Beenleigh



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**From:** Peter Hollier  
**Sent:** Monday, 10 January 2011 7:30 AM  
**To:** Peta Miller  
**Subject:** FW: Commissioner's Notifiable Incident Report

Dear Peta

Could you please contact me this morning to discuss the circumstances surrounding this event please.

Pete

Superintendent Peter Hollier AFSM  
Acting Director Rural Operations  
Queensland Fire and Rescue Service  
Central Office Kedron  
Phone [REDACTED]  
Fax [REDACTED]  
Mobile [REDACTED]

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3/05/2011

OK  
PAM



*the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.*

**From:** Lee Anne Chamberlin  
**Sent:** Monday, 10 January 2011 01:37  
**To:** QFRS Commissioners statewide notification group  
**Subject:** Commissioner's Notifiable Incident Report

**Firecom:** SOUTH EAST  
**Date:** 10/01/2011  
**Incident Type:** SWIFT WATER  
**Incident No:** QF6-10-002443  
**GARS Level:** 1  
**eIAP Number:**  
**Address:** HARRIS RD GRANTHAM  
**Situation:** 2 RURAL FFs RELEASED FROM VEH IN FLOOD WATERS, VOLUNTARY EVACUATION OF RESIDENTS IN HARRIS ST  
**Action:** QFRS RESOURCES ASSISTING SES/QPS WITH 12 RESIDENT EVACUATIONS, SHIRE MAYOR ORGANISING TPT OF RESIDENTS TO EVAC CENTRES IN GATTON  
**Resources:** 311A, 311Y, 678A, , GRANTHAM 41 & 42  
**Incident Controller or QFRS Commander:** SO BUCKLEY  
**Update:**

3/05/2011

CK  
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**Courtney Keim**

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**From:** Peta Miller  
**Sent:** Thursday, 14 April 2011 11:48 AM  
**To:** Courtney Keim  
**Subject:** Copy from my diary notes

10th of January 2011

Phone call to FO Grantham RFB. No answer - message left.

Second call made to FO Grantham - Asked Vivienne how she and Peter were and advised glad that they were both OK. Vivienne advised that she and Peter Ingold were assisting the Mayor with flood review of the area. Vehicle that Mayor was in stopped and she and Mr Ingold continued past. The wash created pushed the appliance off the road into ditch. Vivienne advised that she and Mr Ingold reported this immediately and the Group Officer Stuart Damrow who was also onsite and he advised Firecom and requested SWR techs. Vivienne advised that she remained in constant touch via radio. As A/ADRO I was only advised of this via an email from the A/DRO Peter Hollier.

I asked why they had driven into the water and Viv advised she was not the driver and could not explain why Mr Ingold had driven past the other stopped vehicles.

FO Vivienne Jamieson advised that the vehicle, she believed was still on the side of the road where it had been left. Requested that Viv please complete FO report advising details of the incident. She confirmed this would be done and supplied.

CK  
Alm