

Tara community meeting – 23 March 2011

Summary of discussion

Background

The Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry held a community meeting at the Western Downs Regional Council Customer Service Centre. Ten residents attended the meeting, including council representatives and local landowners. The following summary is an overview of the issues raised with Commission staff by Tara residents. It is not meant to represent the views of the community as a whole.

Issues arising:

- Re-supply of essential supplies was required through Toowoomba. However formal requirements hampered timely re-supply.
- Panic buying limited the ability to re-supply and had to be regulated.
- SES personnel could not assist in many cases as the rise was too swift and remained in place for some time. This was understood by the community who rallied together and acted to respond to the emergency themselves.
- Insurance will cover the smaller items that are essential for work which in turn affects residents' ability to earn an income.
- Damaged road conditions hampered residents' ability to feed livestock.
- The effect of levees and land clearing that exacerbated the runoff and swift water rises was raised.
- The area was too small a catchment to be able to install widespread gauges. Instead, residents implemented a system of local warnings in the form of phoning locals and monitoring rainfall totals in their own gauges.
- Lack of mobile phone coverage made it difficult for residents to communicate with each other and assess the situation as the flood event continued.