

STATEMENT OF WITNESS

Prepared by: Legal Services Unit

Date: 24/03/2011

Name of Witness: Gary William Taylor

Address of Witness: Emergency Services Complex, Cnr Park and Kedron Park Road, Kedron

Occupation: Public Servant

Position: Assistant Director-General (Corporate Support Division)

Telephone: [REDACTED]

I, Gary William Taylor, Assistant Director-General (Corporate Support Division) for the Department of Community Safety state:

1. I am a qualified accountant and have held senior financial and management positions in the public and private sectors in Queensland and Victoria.
2. I joined the former Queensland Emergency Services in 1994 as the Chief Finance Officer and was appointed as Assistant Director-General, Corporate Support Division in 2009. I have responsibility for management oversight of finance, facilities management, human resources, and information and communication technology within the Department of Community Safety (DCS).
3. I have been provided with a copy of an information notice from the Queensland Floods Commission ("the Commission") of Inquiry dated 18 March 2011. I note that the notice requests a written statement in response to the question outlined in the notice regarding those aspects of the DCS submission to the Commission as they relate to Information and Communications Systems.

Radio Communications

Operation

4. The DCS radio networks operate on an analogue system and are the main communications link between Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS), and Queensland Ambulance Service (QAS) officers on the frontline working together in the same local area, and frontline officers and communication centres. Satellite Telephony systems are used in remote and regional areas of the State in the event that radio systems and other lines of communications (such as mobile phones) are not available. Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) Search and Rescue Helicopter have access to Queensland Police Service (QPS), QFRS and QAS radio networks for the purposes of operational coordination at the frontline.

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Witness (Gary William Taylor):

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Date: 26/05/11 JM

Exhibit Number: 493

5. I have been informed and believe that State Emergency Services (SES) operational units also utilise stand alone localised radio networks that are not integrated with any central communications capability managed by the DCS Information and Communication Systems (ICS).

Assessment

6. I believe that during the Queensland Floods the radio networks performed well within the constraints of analogue technology. I am informed that some network coverage gaps were experienced in the field and the network was at times congested. In one case, this required the deployment of a mobile radio repeater to supplement the network and support front line staff to improve coverage in radio communications.

Telephones

Triple Zero Operation

7. Telstra manages and maintains the emergency Triple Zero call handling system.
8. When a person calls Triple Zero it is my understanding that Telstra asks which service is required: QPS, QFRS or QAS.
9. When a caller nominates QFRS or QAS, the Telstra operator remains on the line until the call has been acknowledged by a QFRS or QAS communications centre officer. If it is not answered within 27 seconds then it is diverted to another pre-determined QFRS or QAS Communications Centre through an agreed process with Telstra.
10. When the call is put through, a QFRS or QAS Communications Centre Officer takes the details of the emergency and determines the level of the assistance required. Details are then entered into the Emergency Services Computer Aided Dispatch System (ESCAD).
11. In most incidents, a vehicle will have been dispatched before the call is completed as our professional Communication Centre Officers continue to provide advice while resources are on the way.

132 500 Operation

12. Calls to the State Emergency Service (SES) 132 500 number are answered by the Smart Service Queensland (SSQ) Call Centre which is part of the Queensland Government Department of Public Works.
13. However, I believe that any calls from the Brisbane metropolitan area are directed to the Brisbane City Council Call Centre.
14. DCS provides support for calls to 132 500 through provision of email support to enable messaging from SSQ to EMQ.

Assessment

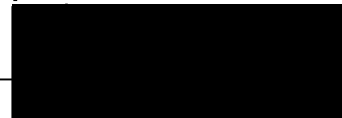
15. I am informed and believe that DCS managed in excess of 145, 000 incidents through our ESCAD system during the floods and in general the department's telephone systems were able to manage the increased volume of activity and performed well.

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

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Computer Aided Dispatch

Operation

16. The DCS ESCAD System manages incidents received through Triple Zero calls and facilitates the dispatching process to enable either a QAS or QFRS response.
17. I understand that once the Triple Zero call is received, the communications centre officer takes the details of the request for assistance and enters them into ESCAD to determine the level of the assistance required. The computer system will then recommend the most appropriate resources/vehicles to respond based on the location of the incident. This can be overridden by the communication centre officers if required.
18. EMQ do not utilise ESCAD for any of their services.

Assessment

19. I am informed and believe that there were no significant issues experienced by the critical systems (ESCAD and its related interfaces) or telephone systems utilised by the communications centres within the Triple Zero environment that impacted on operational capabilities.

Emergency and disaster management systems

Operation

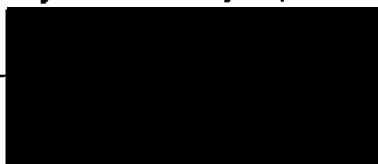
20. DCS uses a variety of media when managing emergencies and disasters.
21. When dealing with the public, these include traditional print, radio and television media, emergency alerting systems, and information systems such as Internet sites (portals). Over 40 Emergency Alert notifications were posted to the www.disaster.qld.gov.au website during the flooding event.
22. When communicating with staff internally, EMQ maintains a portal environment, including the Disaster Management (DM) Portal which is used by staff and volunteers simultaneously as a communication tool for the purpose of managing activities such as status updates, task tracking, District and Local Disaster Management Group liaison, and logistical support.
23. The Total Operational Mapping (TOM) System is a visualisation tool used by DCS for planning and situational awareness prior to and during emergency incidents. The system enables a variety of information sources to be displayed on a map and is used by the State Disaster Coordination Centre and State Operations Coordination Centre.

Assessment

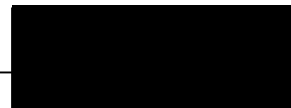
24. There were no issues with the emergency and disaster systems reported to me other than the server for the DM Portal being temporarily unavailable due to commercial online service provider's premises at West End being inundated. DCS ICT staff recovered the hosting technology and re-established it at the Emergency Services Complex at Kedron. The DM Portal was unavailable for several hours during this incident which meant that online communication with external disaster management entities such as Councils was limited. I have been advised that EMQ utilised other communication channels during this period in accordance with Standard Operating Procedures.

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Communication Networks

Operation

25. I understand the DCS data communications networks can either be fixed in nature, such as the networks interconnecting the State Disaster Coordination Centre to Regional, District and Local Disaster Management Groups, or mobile in nature, for example commercial 3G networks which extend the fixed networks to front-line personnel in the field. This includes traditional communication tools such as email.

Assessment

26. Due to the high volume of traffic on the public network during the floods there were significant congestion issues. Although there were no specific failures within the DCS data communications network, there were communications issues experienced due to a high reliance on commercial i.e. Telstra, Optus etc 'Next G/3G' public networks. I understand frontline officers attempting to utilise data communications services to relay or receive information within flood impacted areas were affected by these communication issues.

In-Vehicle Systems

Operation

27. In addition to radio networks, DCS uses a variety of voice and data networks to carry communications to and from the frontline. For example, upon dispatch from the communication centre, QAS will communicate via voice over the radio networks (and if necessary the mobile phone) whilst at the same time sending out a pager message (carried over a commercial paging service) and data messages to the in vehicle Mobile Data Terminal (for QAS and only within the South East corner of Queensland).
28. QAS utilise a number of technologies in vehicle that are managed by ICS. These include Automatic Vehicle Location systems and Mobile Data Terminals (only within the South East corner of Queensland) and 'Tough Books' (hardened laptops) for patient management. I believe they also utilise commercial services such as mobile phones, paging services and messaging systems.
29. QFRS utilise Automatic Vehicle Location (only within South East corner of Queensland). I believe they also utilise mobile phones where necessary.
30. I believe SES units have radio systems in vehicles, however these are not managed by ICS.

Assessment

31. I am informed and believe that DCS in-vehicle information systems did not suffer any major disruptions during the flood event period.
32. I make this statement of my own free will believing its contents to be true and correct.

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

Witness (Gary William Taylor):

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Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of Section 110A (6) (c) (ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 18/10/2010 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]

Signature

Signed at Brisbane this .. day of 24 March 2011

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

Witness (Gary William Taylor):

[Redacted Witness Signature]

~~JP~~/Solicitor/Commissioner for
Declarations:

[Redacted Signature]