

Name of Witness	Alan James MANN	
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]	
Address and contact details	[REDACTED]	Emerald [REDACTED]
Occupation	Maintenance Planner (Kestral Mine, Rio Tinto)	
Officer taking statement	Detective Sergeant Stephen Platz	
Date taken	11/05/2011	

Alan James MANN states:

1. I am a [REDACTED] year old married male presently residing at [REDACTED] Emerald with my wife and two daughters. I previously resided at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Emerald until the recent floods inundated that home. I moved into the [REDACTED] address in January 2005 and have lived in Emerald since 1976. The house was not in a classified flood zone and to my knowledge is still not classed as in one.
2. During my time at Emerald there has been regular flooding that cuts off the main roads into town but in living memory I cannot recall a flood that inundated suburbs like it did in December 2010. Approximately 20 kilometres, south, by road there is the Fairbairn dam that is fed mainly by the Nagoa River. The river flows just east of the main part of Emerald and is the overflow waterway for the dam.

QFCI

Date: 25/05/11 JWMExhibit Number: 475Witness Signature: [REDACTED]
Page Number 1 of 6

Signature of officer: [REDACTED]

400 George Street Brisbane
GPO Box 1738 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone 1300 309 634
Facsimile +61 7 3405 9750
www.floodcommission.qld.gov.au

3. On the 8th day of January 2008 we received a significant amount of rainfall in Emerald and its surrounds and as a result the Fairbairn dam overflowed into the Nagoa River. The height recorded at the Vince Lester Bridge was 15.85 metres. This overflow subsequently caused flooding in the eastern parts of town which caused inundation to houses in the Blue Gums estate and flooding to some properties only a hundred metres from my old house. The flooding that occurred in my old part of town was never a usual occurrence.

4. Prior to this flood, the council approved an industrial development on the western side of the Gregory Highway where they filled in low lying natural water courses and built up the land to construct various businesses. Due to this development I believe it has changed the natural topography of the area and caused any excess overflow to flood into town, which had not occurred previously. This development, culminated with inadequate drainage channels and culverts, I believe, resulted in flooding of parts of Emerald that had not flooded before. On the 08/02/2008 I wrote a letter to the Central Highland regional council outlining this issue. I received a letter back from the council on the 24/09/2008. The council disagreed with my assertions concerning the channel but agreed with me concerning the inadequacy of the culverts at the Gregory Highway, where the water cannot flow away quick enough. I am able to produce this correspondence.

**EXHIBIT: Letters sent to and received from Central Highlands
 Regional Council.**

Marked Exhibit/...

5. During December 2010 we had received a high amount of rainfall. Due to this amount of rainfall there were concerns amongst the residents that there might be a repeat of the 2008 floods and these concerns were communicated to the council. On the 8th December 2010 the local mayor, Peter Maguire, issued a press release in the Central Queensland news regarding this issue. The mayor stated that residents concerns were not based on official recordings and hydrology reports and that they should take a 'chill pill'. As a result of what happened later I don't

think the mayor was taking the concerns and advice of long term residents seriously. Sometime after the floods the mayor made another press release, contradicting his previous article stating that hydrology was not a perfect science, in which he took into account more than local advice. I am able to produce a copy of these press releases.

6. **EXHIBIT:** **News paper article dated 08/12/2010 in Central Queensland News.**

Marked Exhibit No/...

- EXHIBIT:** **Newspaper article dated 1st April 2011 in Central Queensland News.**

Marked Exhibit No/..

7. Around Christmas time 2010 the rainfall continued and now the local authorities seemed to be taking things more seriously. The local community then received advice from the council, via text messages and word of mouth, to expect flooding possibly 300 mL higher than the 2008 flood. This height was based on river heights as a result of water overflows from the dam. As a result of this advice we moved furniture up on tables in the house in expectation of the said flood levels.
8. On the 29th of December 2010 I was at home and monitoring the drainage channel west of my house and our access crossing at Egan and Baker Street. I could see that the flood waters were rising rapidly towards my house. Also around this date we received an evacuation alert from the council advising people to evacuate our area due to flooding. The dam was well and truly overflowing by this stage. Some people had already evacuated but chose to stay the extra twelve hours.
9. At about 7.00am on the 30th December 2010 I could see the council putting up 'road closed' signs at the end of Baker Street where the flood waters were encroaching. This was only 300 metres away. At this stage I made the decision to evacuate. My family and I then drove to my brother's house at Burns Avenue

where we then remained for two weeks. The town of Emerald was then cut off for the next three or four weeks. The recorded height at the Vince Lester bridge at the peak of the flood was 16.05 metres.

10. By the 1st of January 2011 the flood waters had inundated my home by at least one metre of water through the whole house. The only piece of furniture that survived was our dining table but everything else including beds, electrical gear and other personal items were destroyed.
11. As a result of my experience prior to and during this flood I believe these are the main issues of concern.

Preparation

12. I think the council and Sunwater have failed in their preparation for flooding in Emerald. There has been no real drive for infrastructure with regards to flood mitigation for the town. The dam has been overflowing since October 2010 and is obviously inadequate to hold the amount of water we received. The dam also overflowed by four metres in 2008. It has been raised that the dam needs to be upgraded but Sunwater has indicated that these upgrades are too expensive. The council have also failed to maintain waterways and drainage channels that are filled with silt and vegetation. The drainage channel and culverts on the Gregory highway are inadequate to carry the water away. It is a recognised fact that Emerald is in a low lying area but has only suffered flooding to this degree in recent known history. I think that the development approved by council in the town in areas that were once natural drainage now cause water to flow back into town. The lack of infrastructure to mitigate flooding is my main issue.

Warning

13. The council did warn residents prior to the main flood event and I understand that it is difficult to predict flood heights. I do not think, however, that the council took into account concerns by local residents who predicted significant flood levels but because they are not hydrologists or other officials, they don't take them

Witness Signature...
Page Number 4 of 6

... Signature of officer

seriously. Some of the people advising about the floods, that were ignored, were farmers out west who reported significant flooding on their properties that they hadn't seen for many years. With regards to the method of warning, the use of text messages was good however is not always guaranteed as people may not have phones or other issues surrounding telecommunications.

Response

14. The council and other authorities appeared to have a plan with regards to the evacuation of residents. The council used the town hall and agricultural college as an evacuation centre which has been used in previous floods. My family and I did not require any immediate response but from what I did see it appeared the emergency services were performing their role. I saw the police out in tinnies and at the road blocks. I did call the SES leading up to the inundation of my house requesting sand bags. The recording on the phone asked me if my situation was life threatening and, it wasn't, so I then got a message saying that my request for sandbags may take up to 24 hours. I ended getting sand bags myself. The mine that I worked for helped out by flying in sandbags for the community. Overall I think their response was OK but I think they can definitely learn from this last event.

Recovery

15. The main recovery effort came from the local community. All my help to clean out my house and others was done by residents and private businesses. The local fire brigade hosed out some of my house of the mud which was good, but compared with the support by local businesses and their equipment, this was fairly small. The council set up recovery centres where they gave out cleaning packs and other items to assist in the clean up. These centres were good but I think they were overwhelmed with the logistics of organising the clean up. I have heard of a bloke who turned up at the council offering a back hoe, staff and other equipment offering to help out but were turned away. I also asked the council to take away a dead kangaroo that drowned in my house. I hung it on the gate for the council to take away but they never came. I ended up doing this myself. I accept that the

council can't do everything and people have to look after themselves to a degree. The community co-ordinated their own recovery and people volunteered there time and effort to clean up. I suggest that the council may need better trained staff with regards to disaster management in the recovery stage.

Insurance

16. I was insured with Suncorp and had specific flood insurance. I lost my house and contents but Suncorp has covered me for my losses. I received a payout from Suncorp about three weeks and I am happy with there response. I also went through a broker to get this insurance, which I think helped.

Alan MANN

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 11/05/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 6 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false.

I
.....Signature

Signed atEmerald.....this.....11th..day of.....May.....2011

Witness Signature.
Page Number 6 of 6

Signature of officer

Concerned Residents (Kidd, Baker, Egan St. area)
C/o PO Box 697
Emerald 4720

8/2/2008

Emerald Shire Council
PO Box 21
Emerald 4720

Sunwater
87 Esmond St.,
Emerald 4720


Chief Executive Officer, Councilors and Sunwater management,

Re: Kidd, Baker and Egan Street areas.

As residents of the above mentioned area we would like to raise some concerns to you regarding the recent floods.

Firstly regarding the town map which was coloured blue to highlight flooded areas and printed in the CQ News 25/1/2008. Our area was included in this and certainly we did receive flood waters to this area but we would like to highlight that very few homes received water in them and to the uninformed this map would make our area seem a risk to live in and greatly devalue our area. This area is probably one of the best places to live in the town, with its high quality homes, peaceful environment and closeness to the towns facilities. It would be appreciated if whoever gave authority for this map to be printed thought of the residents before advertising our area and others as a flood zone.

Next concern relates to the irrigation channel which runs beside Munroe Rd. and to the back of the Kidd St. estate. This channel starts in the irrigation area to the west of town continuing past our area, under the highway, through town and making its way to the river on Donohue Rd. Correct us if we are wrong but wasn't this channel built for the runoff from the irrigation farms and it is the farmers who pay drainage rights for the use of this channel, this channel is no where near big enough to handle flood waters. Had this channel been full from runoff water from the farms there could have been major devastation. The channel itself and the Gregory Highway crossing appear far too small. Since the development of industrial sites to the north of our area, the natural waterway that used to run water to the north east and through the Pritchard Rd. area has been filled and all waters are turned back to the south and into this channel which is then a further cause of waters to back up. Watching this area when the flooding was occurring and seeing where the waters wanted to go brings the residents of this area to strongly object to any further filling and development of the land from the railway line east and to the north of Munroe Rd. unless major drainage works are in place. Seeing the inability of the channel to cope with flood waters, major upgrades are required regardless. Also Sunwater may be able to confirm, is there a ring tank and a road built across and in the drainage reserve in the farms towards the end of the channel near Donohue Rd.? If so this may not be helping the release of water. Maintenance on this channel may also need to be looked at. The storm on the 4/2/2008 also highlighted the fact the drainage and the reliance of this channel to remove storm water is insufficient, as Creek St. was full and up to the back yards of the houses backing on to this area and the water had a good flow across Egan St. and Baker St. with no easy escape.



We believe that note should be taken and a refocus on this developing towns drainage system, as its inability to cope has been shown up by the recent floods. With stories heard from people who have never been flooded before and now have been, and the reverse on this highlights a problem.

To end on a positive we would also like to express our appreciation to the towns many services and volunteers for their efforts and assistance in all forms during this event.

Once again as proud citizens of this great town we felt the need to express our concerns relating to our area and hope this finds you for discussion and we wait your response.

Regards,

Concerned citizens

We believe that note should be taken and a refocus on this developing towns drainage system, as its inability to cope has been shown up by the recent floods. With stories heard from people who have never been flooded before and now have been, and the reverse on this highlights a problem.

To end on a positive we would also like to express our appreciation to the towns many services and volunteers for their efforts and assistance in all forms during this event.

Once again as proud citizens of this great town we felt the need to express our concerns relating to our area and hope this finds you for discussion and we wait your response.

Regards,

Concerned citizens

Kenji Higuchi
Kenji Higuchi

Dennis Down City - Emerald

J. D. J. Watkins
[Redacted]
EMERALD

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

James Donohoe 54 unit [Redacted]

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Doug & Megann Woodham 5 Kidd St Emerald

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Pat Brown 11/2000 30 Hill St

Fred Ellis 35 Kidd St Emerald



CONTACT NAME: Bryan Ottone
TELEPHONE: [REDACTED]
MOBILE: [REDACTED]
FAX: 1300 242 687
EMAIL: [REDACTED]
Emerald Office, PO Box 21 Emerald Qld 4720

24 September 2008

Concerned Residents (Kidd, Baker, Egan St area)
C/o PO Box 697
Emerald Qld 4720

Dear Sir/Madam

Reference: Kidd, Baker & Egan Street Areas Following the January 2008 Flood

Thank you for your letter of 8 February 2008 signed by residents of Kidd Street, Emerald. In the flood recovery process a lot of work has been carried out in mapping the event, assessing possible mitigation strategies and avenues as well as lobbying for funding assistance to improve early warning of flooding events. This will be an ongoing process.

The coloured map in the CQ News was not authorised by Emerald Shire Council. However for your information Council now has very detailed maps of the floodwaters within town that show land inundation which are available for inspection, under supervision, at the Council Offices. As you highlight in your letter, flood maps are easily misinterpreted by the uninformed, which is why Council will not give out copies of these maps and only permit viewing under supervision to ensure those viewing the maps interpret them correctly.

Feedback from SunWater following the January 2008 flood was that they were very happy with the way the irrigation channels handled such an extreme event.

The adequacy of this channel was again proved with the storm on 4 February 2008 which you also mention in your letter. This storm event involved 100mm in 1 hour, a 1 in 100 year event in Emerald is 93.8mm in 1 hour.

In Queensland and across Australia a 1 in 100 year event is the generally accepted benchmark for overland drainage and as no dwellings were inundated Council considers that this channel provided an acceptable level of service.

However having said this, Council also recognises that the channels performance is hindered by the capacity of the culverts under the Gregory Highway and Council will lobby Department of Main Roads to increase the culverts capacity, and hence minimise the backing up of floodwaters in the Kidd Street/Baker Street area.

I wish to apologise for the time taken to reply to your letter however Council needed to gather & review all the facts & data necessary to make an informed response. The rainfall

10 May 2011 Register Login

Central Queensland News

Home News Sport Business Entertainment Lifestyle Travel Photos Weather Classifieds MyCareer Drive Domain
Local Queensland National World Offbeat More News Federal Budget 2011 Search

Mayor calls for more trust

Di Stanley | 8th December 2010

Today Sunny 11°C/22°C Tomorrow Hostly sunny 7°C/21°C
Emerald forecast >>

TAKE a chill pill, fire up the barbie and have a beer, the Mayor has told his community.

Cr Peter Maguire was attempting to allay public fears of a repeat of the 2008 Emerald flood, as rumours of an impending deluge continued to plague the town.

Panic buying seen in Emerald last Friday was repeated yesterday, forcing the Mayor to issue the "chill pill" edict.

Cr Maguire said it was important residents retained faith in the best expert advice given to the Central Highlands Council and its local disaster management group.

"Last weekend there were rumours everywhere."

"Yesterday they've started again," he said.

"And there's apparently an indication of panic buying (on Tuesday)." He said calls from shopping centre management had confirmed this.

"People have got to understand that the council, and myself as Mayor and chairman of the local disaster management group, are the point of truth.

"I want to be as clear as I can, if there are going to be any errors in information or advice, I will take the blame."

Cr Maguire said it was localised flooding across Emerald on Friday when close to 200mm of rain fell, and the Fairbairn Dam spillway failed to reach the maximum predicted peak of 2.5m this week.

Regular briefings, if not hourly as the situation demanded, were being taken by council and the disaster group, he said.

"We are in a situation now where we have to continue to monitor the weather situation.

"The dam is running over, the whole place is full of water, but people need to not listen to the rumours.

"We have been trying to get information out to the media, the ABC is the emergency disaster radio station, and we have briefings posted on our website, people manning the phones to answer any question.

"What people need to understand is we take the best information we get from the Bureau of Meteorology hydrologists, the SunWater hydrologists, the BOM chief weather forecaster and local people - that's what we work off.

"We said on Friday the dam would go to about 2.5m, and it didn't even hit 2m; so these people were right.

"Also, the Vince Lester Bridge is in no danger of going over."



CHILL OUT: Mayor Peter Maguire. file

Great Offers for the Over 50s

At Apia we don't charge you any more to pay by the month. It makes insurance for over 50s a rewarding experience.

[Click Here for a quote>>](#)

Advertisement
Score a try and join footytips.com.au

Advertisement

Lake Eyre 6 Day 4WD Tour with APT	Knock down your power bills!	Join Sportingbet Today & Receive a \$100 Bonus Bet!
-----------------------------------	------------------------------	---

Most Popular

- Turkish delight for Vettel
- Iranian poll top Twitter topic for 2009
- Thor top of American box office
- Bikini designer sparks Hindu anger
- 'Robert Pattinson hysteria amazing'
- Volkswagen give Polo R the nod
- Tributes flow for Lionel Rose
- Brad Pitt dines with Courteney Cox
- Malay refugee deal could include kids
- Cyclone shelters announced for Qld

Advertisement
Special offers

- \$1 Breakfasts
- \$20M on 14th May!
- Fly Free* on APT

Horoscopes
Taurus
21 April - 21 May
This is probably a good time for all parties to back off a bit and make sure that what looks like a great idea isn't actually a hidden misunderstanding. What... [More Horoscopes >>](#)
Select your zodiac sign
Aries | Taurus | Gemini | Cancer | Leo | Virgo | Libra | Scorpio | Sagittarius | Capricorn | Aquarius | Pisces



Recommend 9 recommendations. Sign up to see what your friends recommend.

More Stories

- News
- Ways to stay warm in winter
 - Don't get burnt
 - Partners in doghouse, pets move in
 - Shoe standards too strict: patron
 - Help your local pub get U.G.L.Y

Ads by Google

We did the best we could do: Mayor

Tara Miko | 1st April 2011

Today Sunny 11°C/22°C
 Tomorrow Mostly sunny 7°C/21°C
[Emerald forecast »](#)

NO ONE can predict the extent of a major flood event.

It doesn't matter how many axe marks scar trees from decades ago, or the number of modern rain gauge stations the council puts in.

The fact is, hydrology is not a perfect science, and the best the Central Highlands Regional Council could do in December and January as Emerald came closer to enduring their second major flood in two years was to relay the information as quickly and as accurately as possible.

And that is what CHRC Mayor Peter Maguire said he did.

"Look, we did the best we could with the information and data we had from the gauging stations upstream from the dam, and we relayed that information once we got it," Cr Maguire said.

"People can be critical of the text messages and what (the council) can send out, but we were limited to 160 characters in each SMS.

"The figures change, I know that, and I was involved in the discussions with the hydrologists before the messages were sent out."

About a month before the flood event, Cr Maguire assured Emerald residents he was the "point of truth" for the floods, and vowed he would keep people as informed as possible when the town faced inundation again.

At Monday's Flood Information Session at McIndoe Park, Cr Maguire and representatives from the Local Disaster Management Group, which he chairs, and SunWater opened the floor to flood victims to ask questions about the disaster, and raise concerns they had regarding the town's future.

"I thought there might have been more people there," Cr Maguire said.

"I think some people didn't get a chance to have their say or ask their questions, but what we (on the panel) were asked and told, we've taken on board and we'll look into it."

The main criticisms aired at the session dealt with the council's reluctance to use local information, but instead rely on gauging stations and Bureau of Meteorology data.

"I know people were ringing in and telling me water levels and what-not, but there was no point telling me because I'm not a hydrologist," Cr Maguire said.

"You just can't work on word of mouth."

Cr Maguire was sympathetic to the town, and said he knew how difficult it was for people to rebuild their lives once again.

"People need to be aware we are on a floodplain and these events have been happening for years," he said.

"We all need to be prepared as best we can.

"The worst part is now.

"The event - we can handle the event - but three or four months down the track are when the problems start happening.

"We need to look after our friends and neighbours because people will start having problems and we need to help them out.



Mayor Peter Maguire (right) says the Central Highlands Regional Council will take on board community input heard at Monday night's Flood Information Session.

Photo Tara Miko

Great Offers for the Over 50s

At Apia we don't charge you any more to pay by the month. It makes insurance for over 50s a rewarding experience.

[Click Here for a quote >>](#)

Ad blocked

Advertisement



Advertisement

--	--	--

Most Popular

- > Turkish delight for Vettel
- > Iranian poll top Twitter topic for 2009
- > Thor top of American box office
- > Bikini designer sparks Hindu anger
- > 'Robert Pattinson hysteria amazing'
- > Volkswagen give Polo R the nod
- > Tributes flow for Lionel Rose
- > Brad Pitt dines with Courteney Cox
- > Malay refugee deal could include kids
- > Cyclone shelters announced for Qld

Advertisement

Special offers

- \$1 Breakfasts
- \$20M on 14th May!
- Fly Free* on APT

Horoscopes

Taurus
21 April - 21 May

This is probably a good time for all parties to back off a bit and make sure that what looks like a great idea isn't actually a hidden misunderstanding. What... [More Horoscopes >>](#)

Select your zodiac sign

Aries | Taurus | Gemini | Cancer | Leo | Virgo | Libra | Scorpio | Sagittarius | Capricorn | Aquarius | Pisces

Advertisement







