

# Transcript of Proceedings

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THE HONOURABLE JUSTICE C HOLMES, Commissioner

MR JAMES O'SULLIVAN AC, Deputy Commissioner

MR PHILLIP CUMMINS, Deputy Commissioner

MR P CALLAGHAN SC, Counsel Assisting

MS E WILSON, Counsel Assisting

IN THE MATTER OF THE COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY ACT 1950

COMMISSIONS OF INQUIRY ORDER (No. 1) 2011

QUEENSLAND FLOODS COMMISSION OF INQUIRY

BRISBANE

..DATE 13/05/2011

..DAY 21

THE COMMISSION RESUMED AT 10.04 A.M.

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COMMISSIONER: Yes, Ms Wilson.

MS WILSON: Madam Commissioner, Mr Daniel McGuire has provided a victim impact statement to the Commission. Would this be a timely moment for that to be read?

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COMMISSIONER: Yes. Do you want to make it an exhibit or not?

MS WILSON: No, it doesn't necessarily need to be an exhibit.

COMMISSIONER: Well, I will ask my associate to do that then.

ASSOCIATE: Daniel David McGuire states: I'm a 53-year-old man. I live at 1346 Gatton-Helidon Road, Grantham. I have lived at this address for three and a half years with my wife Llync Clarke Jibson and my children Garry Daniel Jibson, 12 years, Zac Jibson, seven years, and Jocelyn Jibson, five years.

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I have known Llync since she was 16 years of age. She started working for me in the boat building industry. We formed a relationship and started living together when Llync was 18 years of age.

For nine years whilst working together we were inseparable, working seven days a week from dawn till dusk. This continued until 2004 when I got injured at work and had to stop working. Llync then cared for me whilst I recovered.

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I would describe Llync as a very hard worker, passionate and caring person. Llync was heavily involved in community and voluntary work and would always put other people before herself. Llync and I had a very strong relationship over the years. With our children we were a very close-knit family. We tried to spend as much time together as a family as we could.

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As a mum, Llync idolised her three children and provided an excellent role model for her children. I'm forever grateful for the way in which she raised our children.

To me, Llync was my rock. I never went to school and I couldn't read or write up until five years ago when Llync had the patience to teach me. Whilst boat building, I couldn't read plans so Llync used to explain the plans to me. She always encouraged me to do better and largely due to her support, I obtained a certificate IV in Train the Trainer for First-Aid Workplace Health and Safety. In New South Wales fire fighting, Llync and I both completed swift water rescue and road crash rescue certificates. Llync, through her encouragement, helped me progress to a jet fuel certificate which enables me to fly more advanced helicopters.

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Since Llync's death I feel lost, rat shit stressed and going

backwards. My health has gone backwards also. Prior to Llync's death I was on two tablets of Tramal 200 milligrams a day for pain relief. I am now up to six tablets a day and I have now developed an addiction to them. These tablets are morphine based. I miss her greatly as I no longer have her support. I feel that if Zac wasn't here, I would no longer want to live.

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I would like to talk about my children Garry, Shorty, and Jocelyn, Joshy. Shorty only had his 12th birthday on the 1st of January. Shorty and Zac were real Mum's boys whilst Joshy was my little princess. Shorty and Joshy were outside kids and enjoyed life to the fullest. They were happy-go-lucky kids. Shorty was my little helper. Whenever I would deliver first-aid lectures, he was my computer expert. He would set up the laptop and help me if anything was wrong. Zac used to look out for Joshy. Wherever Joshy was, Zac was.

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Since this incident Zac has regressed mentally back to a three-year-old. This has been diagnosed by a psychiatrist. He is suffering severe behavioural problems and aggression, which he has never had before. I have a large void that can't be filled without my wife Llync and my two children Shorty and Joshy. I am now father and mother to Zac and my life will never be the same again.

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I just wish that the QFRS had done more for Zac and I and I felt left high and dry from lack of support given at the time.

Zac is not handling things well. He was not allowed to attend a recent school camp as he has significant behavioural problems. The school was offered to have staff from Global Care attend the camp with Zac but the school principal said no to their offer. This is not helping a child that has just lost his mum, brother and sister. If Llync could see what is happening to her husband and son by the fire service, some police and local council, she would turn in her grave.

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Llync was helping with rescues since New Year's Day, helping myself with the Rurals. She even stayed behind by herself on the Sunday night while I was doing a medical dash for two people from Robert Street, Grantham, to the Freedom garage at Withcott for QAS. While I was away I found out Llync had travelled with a lady driving a small vehicle going through the barriers. Llync was stuck in front of the barriers trying to stop the traffic as the lady driver had taken the barrier with her car into the water. When Llync reached the lady in the car, the driver was on the phone to triple 0 and had to push the car out of the water and get the driver out. Llync helped save lives in the last 72 hours of her life.

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That day Llync wanted to go to Toowoomba so we could spend time together as a family as we'd spent the prior 72 hours away from the children but, instead, we stayed home so I could sleep as we were told that we were expecting 200 millimetres of rain that afternoon and also in case we had to shut the Gatton-Helidon Road and help people.

I will never be able to replace her as a wife and a mate and a good mum to Zac. With Zac, we are now getting a new home in around four weeks. He, Zac, has told people that when the new house comes, Mummy, Garry and Joshy will be coming home. How do I answer that?

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COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

MS WILSON: Thank you, Madam Commissioner. I call Mr Daniel McGuire.

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DANIEL DAVID MCGUIRE, SWORN AND EXAMINED:

MS WILSON: Thank you. Can you tell this Commission of Inquiry your full name, please?-- Daniel David McGuire.

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On the 10th of January 2011 were you living on the Gatton-Helidon Road in Grantham?-- Yes.

Now, you provided a statement to the police on the 5th of March of this year?-- Yes.

Can you have a look at this document, please. Is that the statement that you provided to the police?-- Yes.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that statement.

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COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 357.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 357"

MS WILSON: You also provided a statement to the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry. Can you have a look at this document. This document was signed on the 9th of May this year?-- Yes.

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And is that your statement?-- Yes.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that document.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 358.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 358"

MS WILSON: Now, Mr McGuire, if I could just take you to a couple of matters. You've also provided a map to the

Inquiry?-- Yes.

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Can you have a look at this document, please. Is that the map that you've provided?-- Yes.

If you could just turn it around. So is that the right way up?-- Yep.

Yes. Okay. Now, you've marked this map and if you could just assist me with these markings. On the top of the map there's an "N". So that's north?-- Yes.

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And south is at the bottom?-- Yes.

And on the left-hand side of the map you've marked "west"?-- Yep.

And the Lockyer Creek?-- Yes.

And so we can see the Lockyer Creek going through the middle of this map?-- Yes.

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Now, on the top of the northern side you've marked the Sandy Creek?-- Yes.

And also the direction towards Helidon?-- Yes.

On the east you've marked the direction towards Gatton?-- Yes.

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And the railway line?-- Yep.

Now, down on the south, at the bottom of the map, you have got some markings there. Can you assist me with those. We've got some sheds?-- Yeah, it - in the corner there's some sheds, a couple of mounds of dirt which are about six to eight metres, a couple of silos and their bays where they actually keep their sand and gravel.

When you say "they", who is "they"?-- Wagners Quarries.

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So we have got sheds and then we've got demountables; is that it?-- Yeah.

And they're just some demountable-----?-- Demountable sheds, that's all they are.

Then we've got two times four-metre walls?-- Yes.

Where are those two times four-metre walls?-- They're on the northern side a little bit. It is very hard to see because - because the trees and that actually cover them.

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Just next to the south where you've got - and you've got some dirt - you've marked some dirt mounds?-- Yes.

Are they those - where are the dirt mounds that you're referring to?-- There's one right up beside the dam.

Yes?-- And there's one just down further in between the - where the creek actually splits where the old creek used to be and where they've actually put the new creek through to make it flow.

When you say right up to the dam, that's on the eastern side of the dam?-- Yes.

You've also got some arrows on this map?-- Yes.

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What do those arrows indicate?-- The arrows indicate that - how the water come down from Helidon way, which is the east. Come down and actually flowed around the dam first off but after that, it couldn't handle it because where I've marked in between a breakage in the creek, there's four - eight to 10 metres of dirt which has got road pipes underneath it, so they've actually blocked the creek. And when the creek was full and it couldn't handle it anymore, it actually come across the dam and come straight at us.

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Okay. You've got there an arrow pointing towards the railway line?-- Yeah, come straight across to the railway line because it didn't take out Gatton Produce, which is only just up the road. So that's come straight across the railway line and come straight back over to our place, down towards us.

That's your observations of the water on the day?-- Yeah.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that map.

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COMMISSIONER: That will be Exhibit 359.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 359"

COMMISSIONER: It is actually a Google map so it is more of an aerial photo.

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MS WILSON: Yes. I tender that picture, that image.

COMMISSIONER: 359.

MS WILSON: Mr McGuire, can I take you to the statement that you've provided to the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry?-- Yes.

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I'm not going to take you through everything that you've contained in that, because that's your evidence, but just some of the matters that I wish to refer to you. Is you've provided some recommendations at the back of that statement. The first recommendation that you provide is in relation to warning systems. That you'd like to see a warning system set up like you have in the RFS in the fire season. Can you tell us about that?-- What we have in the fire season, we've

actually got spotters up on the top of the Range that look out for smoke for us and once they indicate that we've got smoke, they roughly indicate where it is and because Grantham is a central point position in the Lockyer Valley, we usually respond first.

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The next recommendation that you refer to is your view that, "All emergency services including the QPS, QFRS, SES and local council should all work together and communicate with one another and the community in times of natural disasters and during aller emergencies"-- Yeah, because what happened, after the 6th of January we had no communications against each other. All we were doing was trying to work by ourselves all the time. And even QFRS and rurals, QFRS wouldn't come into it all the time so the rurals actually had to take over.

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And then the next recommendation, you say is a follow on to the agencies working together, is in the area of training and you state that in your view training needs to be combined between agencies. Can you explain that to us?-- In the rural section, outer Brisbane areas and that, SES and the rural should actually join together because most of the time, the rurals and SES are the same team when you get out west a little bit more. So, you know, if we can get together and train in the south-east the same as south-west does, it would make it a lot easier.

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Mr McGuire, I have no further questions for you, thank you.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Dollar?

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MR DOLLAR: No, questions thank you.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Porter, it is, isn't it?

MR PORTER: Yes, no questions.

COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

MS BRIEN: No questions, thank you.

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COMMISSIONER: Mr Rolls.

MR ROLLS: Thank you, Commissioner. Mr McGuire, just one matter I wanted to ask you about. You seem to say in the statement that was read to the Commission before that you didn't receive any assistance or you felt you didn't receive any adequate assistance; is that right?-- Yes.

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Can I just ask you about that. It's true, is it not, that you have received some payments from the State and Commonwealth governments since-----?-- I've received \$2,000 out of the government relief fund and the RFBAQ has put us up and given us some clothes and that was it.

All right. Now, for the first month or so after these events

in January you were housed in hotel accommodation; is that the case?-- Yes. 1

And there was a bill for that hotel accommodation which was paid by the Department of Communities?-- I don't know who paid it because when I was put up there I was told the Queensland Fire Service actually put me in there. When the manager of the motel actually started sending the bills in, he got told the Lockyer council was actually going to pay it and I don't know who ended up paying it. 10

Well, I'd suggest to you that it was a bill for \$8,800.30 and it was paid by the State Government?-- Yep.

Do you agree with that?-- I wouldn't know.

But you certainly didn't pay for your accommodation, someone else did?-- No.

The next thing I would like to ask you about is that you have made claims, is this true, for emergency assistance payments? Is that right?-- Yeah, for a small business. 20

Did you on the 18th of January in Toowoomba make a claim under the name of Barry Jibson for an emergency assistance payment on behalf of five people?-- Yeah.

And you received the sum of \$850 as a result-----

COMMISSIONER: Where's this going, Mr Rolls? Ought Mr McGuire be warned? 30

MR ROLLS: No. At least I - it's simply just to demonstrate what payments he has received, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER: All right.

MR ROLLS: You received \$850; is that right?-- No, I received 300 and something because I've still got the cheque in my wallet. 40

Well, you did 340 and that was the result of an application that was made by on the 25th of January in the name of McGuire for the \$340 for emergency assistance?-- Yeah, because I come out - they come out to the motel because I was in lockdown.

COMMISSIONER: And also, again, I ask where is it going in terms of the Commission's terms of reference?

MR ROLLS: Well, the victim impact statement which was gathered by the Commission has seen fit to put in references to lack of assistance. This deals with the question of lack of assistance that has been raised in that material which my client doesn't feel can go unanswered having regard to the assistance that has been provided. 50

COMMISSIONER: All right.

MR ROLLS: So I would suggest to you, Mr McGuire, that you have received two payments for emergency assistance, one for \$850 - sorry, \$850 and one for \$340?-- No, all I've received the one. And, as I've said, I'll still got the cheque in me wallet.

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Also, as a result of that visit to you on the 25th of January, you received a further payment for - to compensate you for loss of household contents in the sum of \$4,780?-- Yeah, it was something like that, yeah.

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It's true, is it not, that the funeral expenses for your spouse and two children were paid by the Department of Communities?-- I don't know who paid it.

It was a payment of \$14,520 that was paid by the State in respect of funeral expenses for your former spouse and two children?-- I got told the RFBAQ was paying for it-----

COMMISSIONER: Could you not just put it that he's had some - I'm, sorry, Mr McGuire, could you hold up for a minute. Could you not just put it that he's had some financial assistance, which he seems to accept? Do you really have to go through every bit like this?

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MR ROLLS: Well, again, Commissioner, it is stated in there that there has been limited assistance received. Perhaps I could do it this way. Mr McGuire, could I suggest to you that you have received from the State and the Commonwealth a sum in excess of \$33,700 in respect of financial - direct financial assistance by those governments arising out of these events?-- I don't know how much I've got. Because with the funeral, I was told the QFRS was paying for it, which - the rural side of it. So, you know, I don't know who paid for it.

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But if you add it up, I'd suggest to you it's \$33,720 that you've received?-- Whatever.

You agree or disagree with that?-- Yeah, it is not much for three lives, is it?

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Can I suggest to you you also speak about Zac and the lack of support he's received whilst at school?-- Yep.

Now, he attends the Grantham State School; is that right?-- Yes.

Since these events, has it been the case that there have been two guidance officers assigned to the school?-- Yes.

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There's been one full-time learning support teacher that's additional attending the school?-- Yes.

There has been one additional classroom teacher assigned to the school?-- That I wouldn't have a clue.

There have been 40 hours, an additional 40 hours of teacher aid time assigned to the school?-- Don't know.

Of which Zac receives 20 teacher aid hours per week?-- I don't believe in that because when he goes to school he sits in the library all day.

In fact, in the week commencing the 21st of March he received 25 hours of teacher aid time that week?-- Well, can you explain to me then why it says at Grantham school that the State Government is actually supplying counsellors full-time for him at the school five days a week when he gets Tuesday for two hours?

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There is an also an extra learning support teacher that has been assigned to the school for the first two weeks of the term?-- Don't know.

There is a district office-----?-- Well, for a start, he hasn't been back since the new term.

Yes.

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COMMISSIONER: Mr Rolls, I'm not clear on your questioning. Are you saying that these people are all assigned to support Zac or are these assigned-----

MR ROLLS: There are resources at the school and the teacher aid time of 20 hours, which has been put to the witness, has been - is especially for Zac.

COMMISSIONER: Would he-----?-- No, it's not. It is for the whole school because there's 46 kids and there's 32 of them affected.

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That seems to answer that.

MR ROLLS: Well, they're my instructions. The district liaison officer was based at the school for the first six weeks of the first term. Do you know about that?-- No. Because for the first - for the first five and a half weeks we were in lockdown and for this term, he hasn't been back yet.

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Can I also suggest to you that you had a conversation in the week commencing the 21st of March with Christie Minns, the principal of the Grantham State School?-- Yep.

Also present at that particular meeting was the administration officer, a Jule Christensen?-- Most probably, yeah.

At that particular meeting there was a discussion about Zac's attendance at a forthcoming school camp?-- Yep.

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COMMISSIONER: Mr Rolls - sorry, Mr McGuire, can I just stop you again - as far as I understood it, and I mightn't have picked up everything, I thought the allegation was that Zac want allowed to go on a school camp but I didn't think there was anything more about the school. Is that it?

MR ROLLS: Well, the - it's said that the school prevented him

from going on the school camp because of behavioural issues. 1

COMMISSIONER: Well, you can ask about that. Why are you asking all these other questions?

MR ROLLS: Well, this deals with the school camp.

COMMISSIONER: Well, we've got to it, have we? All right. Go ahead. 10

MR ROLLS: Yes, thank you, Commissioner. At that meeting Zac's attendance at the school camp was discussed?-- Yes.

And it was thought it would be a good idea for Zac to attend that particular camp?-- Yes.

By you and by the principal?-- Yes.

And, in fact, at that meeting it was decided that Zac would attend the school camp?-- Yes. 20

And at that meeting the relevant forms, the consent form for the organisation conducting the camp and the school consent form, were completed by you-----?-- Yes.

-----giving permission for Zac to attend the camp?-- Yes.

And Zac was therefore attending the camp and that remained the situation for approximately one week?-- Yes. 30

And thereafter you then changed your mind and withdrew Zac from his permission-----?-- No, I didn't change me mind. Christie Minns changed her mind on the Friday.

And after you told her that Zac was not allowed to go on the camp, she informed you that Zac was welcome to attend the school camp should you change your mind?-- No, she told me he couldn't go because the day before he actually played up and put the two counsellors in a corner with a tennis racket up against them. 40

Do you know a Di Rogers?-- Yes.

She's an employee of Queensland Health?-- Yes.

And she has been providing you with counselling assistance?-- Yes.

Is she at the Community Mental Health Service in Toowoomba?-- I know she's with mental health but I'm not quite sure where. 50

Nothing further, thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Ms O'Gorman?

MS O'GORMAN: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Ms Wilson?

MR CALLAGHAN: No re-examination. Madam Commissioner, may Mr McGuire be excused.

COMMISSIONER: Yes, thanks, Mr McGuire, you're excused.

WITNESS EXCUSED

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MS WILSON: I call Mr Hall.

MR KELLY: Commissioner can I announce my appearance.

COMMISSIONER: I'm sorry, I didn't realis we had and extra. Yes.

MR KELLY: My name is Kelly, initial D instructed by Minter Ellison for Energex Limited.

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COMMISSIONER: Thank you. I gave you leave to appear somewhere along the line, did I?

MR KELLY: That's correct, Commissioner, yes.

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BRENT HALL, SWORN AND EXAMINED:

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MS WILSON: Can you tell this Commission of Inquiry your full name, please?-- Brent Hall.

And you're a helicopter pilot?-- That's correct.

And you're employed by Sunshine Helicopter Rescue Service?--  
Sunshine Coast Helicopter Rescue Service.

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This is an organisation that supports the emergency services helicopter network?-- That's correct.

And you provided a statement to the Queensland floods Commission of Inquiry?-- Yes, I did.

Can you have a look at this document, please. Is this your statement?-- Yes, it is.

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Madam Commissioner, I tender that statement.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 360.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 360"

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MS WILSON: The Sunshine Coast Helicopter Rescue Service, how many helicopters does that organisation have?-- We have three helicopters, two based at the Sunshine Coast and one in Bundaberg.

The two based at the Sunshine Coast, can you tell me the capacity of those helicopters?-- We have one twin engine aircraft, a BK117, helicopter that is winch equipped. We also have a long ranger helicopter which is a single engine aircraft but it is also winch equipped.

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And in Bundaberg?-- A twin engine BK117 helicopter which is winch equipped.

Now, you have - you say that you have got a contract to provide helicopter support to the emergency services?-- That's correct.

You don't know the details of that contractual arrangement?-- I have - I have read the contract so I have some understanding of what that contract arrangement is.

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Can you tell us about your understanding of the specific tasking guidelines that exists between the Queensland Emergency Medical Services Coordination Centre and your organisation?-- There is some guidelines that are drawn up for our contract and those guidelines state that we can be

tasked by a number of different agencies. The Queensland  
Emergency Services Coordination Centre, QCC, task us for -  
directly for medical tasks in hospital transfers and other  
accidents. The guidelines also state that we can be tasked  
directly through communication centres, the police  
communication centres and the fire communication centres as  
well as Australian Search and Rescue.

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If you were - sorry, continue?-- There is also a clause in there - a section in there that does talk about disaster management tasking. The current guideline, I believe, talks about being tasked directly by Disaster Co-Ordination Centres. The draft talks about being tasked through EMQ for those - via the disaster co-ordination-----

You attached these guidelines to your statement. Have you got your statement there in front of you?-- Yes, I do.

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Those guidelines that you are referring to - you just talked about current guidelines. The document that is in front of you states that it is effective from the 6th of March 2006. Is that the document that you're referring to?-- Yes, it is.

Do you know whether there has been any update to this document?-- There is a draft - I believe that that document is still in draft. That has an effective date of 2010.

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Okay?-- I have that document with me.

We've probably got that document as well and I'll show it to you?-- It's not the one that I have.

Okay. Perhaps I should see the one that you've got?-- It might just take me a few moments to get it.

That's all right. So, this is a Queensland Emergency Helicopter Network Tasking Guidelines that is effective 2010?-- I believe that - I'm not sure whether it is still in draft or whether that's effective at the moment.

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And when did you get provided this document?-- I'm not sure.

Okay. Well, this year or last year?-- I'm not sure.

Not sure?-- Not sure.

Okay. Have you looked at this document and seen the obligations of the tasking agencies?-- Yes, I have.

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And what is your understanding of the obligations of the tasking agencies?-- They remain reasonably the same as the 2006 document with the change that EMQ - in a disaster situation, EMQ will task us for disaster situations.

When you get tasked by EMQ or QPS, how does that work in to the tasking from QCC?-- Each of those agencies are able to task us independently, although I think the understanding that they are able to do that is not - I don't think they quite understand that as well as they should, but each of the communication centres is able to task the helicopter directly for urgent matters. If they ring us directly, we get them to ring the QCC to ensure that there's no conflicting medical tasking.

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Okay. And then do you hear back from QCC that you are now

allocated to that task that EMQ or QPS have assigned you?--  
Correct.

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So, does the - does the process work this way: EMQ or QPS may ring you and assign you a task, you advise them to ring QCC and then QCC will ring you back and then assign you the task that EMQ or QPS have contacted you about?-- If we get a call from QPS or QFRS with urgent tasking, we are able to respond to that tasking without the approval of the QCC, but we should advise them that we are going to do that. If they subsequently decide that we shouldn't do it, they have the right to stand us down from that task if they feel there is a higher priority task.

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The point that I'm wanting just to ascertain is before you can do the task that has been assigned to you by QPS or EMQ, do you have to get the approval of QCC? Do they have to say, "Yes, that's okay, you can do that task."?-- The way the guidelines are written, no, we don't.

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So unless you hear otherwise, you will do the task for EMQ or QPS?-- Correct.

Madam Commissioner, I will tender that document that Mr Hall has produced. We will make copies and provide it to the parties.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 361.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 361"

MS WILSON: On 10 January this year, were you working that day?-- Not on that day.

Are you aware of what helicopters were available to be tasked that day?-- I believe I have a good understanding of what helicopters were available.

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Can you tell me that?-- There is a number of helicopters associated in this emergency helicopter network. There is an aircraft at the Gold Coast run by Careflight.

I'm sorry, Mr Hall, I should be more specific. Can you tell me about the number of helicopters available in your organisation that were available that day?-- There were three - there were at least two helicopters that were ready and crewed on a short notice that we normally crew, and then there was a third back-up aircraft that could have been manned, if asked.

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Of those two helicopters that were available, were they assigned to any tasks that day?-- The Maroochydoore helicopter was assigned two tasks on the afternoon of the 10th. I've detailed those two in my statement. Would you like me to talk

about those?

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No. And they were in the afternoon?-- They were in the afternoon, and they were around the Sunshine Coast area.

Okay. Are you aware whether there was any contact from the QCC or emergency agencies like QPS or EMQ to your organisation requesting helicopters?-- As far as I'm aware, there were no contact requesting our services in the Lockyer Valley or anywhere down in that area.

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What would be the flight time from, say, Maroochydore to the Lockyer Valley?-- Between 30 to 40 minutes.

And are you aware of the weather conditions on that day?-- I am.

Could your helicopters have got to the Lockyer Valley considering those weather conditions?-- The QFRS actually tasked another civil helicopter from Maroochydore Airport that afternoon and that aircraft flew down to the Lockyer Valley. So, as far as I - as far as I could understand, we would have been able to make it down there as well.

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If I can then take you to the next day, the 11th? You say in your statement that you informed QCC that you had three helicopters available?-- We did.

Why did you have three helicopters available?-- Well, we decided that we would man the back-up aircraft. Given what we had seen the previous day, we felt that there would be a need for extra helicopters, so we brought in some extra personnel to man the spare helicopter.

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And how many of those helicopters were deployed on that day by QCC?-- The two helicopters based at Maroochydore were deployed later in the morning on Tuesday the 11th.

And how long were they on those tasks for?-- We did various tasks throughout that day. There was a couple of medical tasks that were conducted, and then the guys, by chance, contacted QPS in the Caloundra - sorry, the Caboolture area and realised that the QPS needed some support, so they started helping the QPS in the Caboolture area.

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And for that to occur, how does that process occur when QPS contacts the helicopter directly to assist?-- We actually contacted them. There was no contact from the QPS directly to us. Just by chance, we got on to their radio and phoned them to ask whether they needed our help.

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And what was their response?-- Their response was, "Yes, we have some people that need winching out of a situation.", and so we went and supported that, winched those people out of the situation at Caboolture.

And what was the interaction between your organisation and QCC about this task?-- Well, the QCC - we rang them up to say the

QPS are asking for our assistance. They didn't want us to do it initially. I must just clarify, this is the other helicopter-----

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Not yours?-- Not mine, but I was in the area. The QCC had asked them not to do it. They had asked them to go to another medical job at Proston. There were a few phone calls back and forth before the crew of that aircraft convinced the QCC that they should stay and assist the QPS.

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On the 10th and 11th, your helicopters were doing work for the QCC?-- On what date, sorry?

On the 10th and the 11th, your helicopters were being deployed by QCC?-- Yes.

And that was to assist in medical transfers?-- Yes.

Or medical evacuations?-- Yes.

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That is, your point there is that your organisation could have offered more support to the events that were occurring at the Lockyer Valley?-- I think it comes down to a priority of tasks, and I guess our organisation believes that some of the tasks we were doing - certainly on the afternoon of Monday the 10th, shouldn't have been prioritised over our helicopter being used in the Lockyer Valley.

And the tasking by the QCC, that is done by a doctor?-- Yes, it is.

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Who is aware of medical - the medical situation?-- Correct. May not have been aware of what was happening in the Lockyer Valley.

Now, you've provided some recommendations in your statement and one of them is that, "An independent review of how emergency helicopters are tasked during normal operations to ensure efficient and effective support to all of the emergency services." Is that recommendation based on the experiences that occurred on the 10th and 11th of this year - of January this year?-- The recommendation's based not only on the experiences during the 10th and 11th, but also during operations prior to that and subsequent.

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What are you seeking for the review to look at?-- We are seeking the review to look at the communication between the services in tasking - specifically in tasking the emergency services helicopter network. The implementation, I guess, of the guidelines - the guidelines may be right, but we may not have implemented them appropriately. So, that's placing appropriate experienced people in the right positions and then training those people to ensure that the guidelines are implemented appropriately. I also believe that the subject - aviation subject matter expert input into some of the decisions is not there and affects some of the decisions that we - sometimes you have people who haven't operated on helicopters or been experienced in using helicopters making

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the decisions without any subject matter expert input.

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What you're ultimately seeking is a central tasking point in relation to the deployment of helicopters in emergencies?-- I think there is one now. The QCC act as that central tasking point, but it's just not being effective in the way it does that.

And how could it be more effective?-- By ensuring that the communication centres understand the process of mobilising a helicopter, who they've got to contact, how they've got to contact them, and ensuring that there is enough training and experience there to ensure that there is efficient and effective use of those helicopters.

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Thank you, Mr Hall. I have no further questions.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Kelly, do you have anything?

MR KELLY: No questions.

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MR PORTER: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Is it Ms Jessop or have I got you mixed up with someone else.

MS BRIEN: Ms Brien.

COMMISSIONER: Brien. I'm sorry.

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MS BRIEN: Thank you. No questions, thank you.

MR MacSPORRAN: I have nothing, thank you.

MS O'GORMAN: No questions, thank you.

COMMISSIONER: Do you wish the witness excused?

MS WILSON: Yes, Madam Commissioner.

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COMMISSIONER: Thanks very much, Mr Hall. You're excused.

WITNESS EXCUSED

MS WILSON: I call Mark Delany.

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MARK EBERT DELANY, SWORN AND EXAMINED:

MS WILSON: Can you tell this Commission of Inquiry your full name, please?-- Mark Ebert Delany.

And you're the general manager of EMQ Helicopter Rescue?-- Correct.

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You provided the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry a statement?-- Correct.

Can you have a look at this document, please? Is this your statement?-- Yes, it is. There's a couple of minor technicalities that I would like to-----

Certainly?-- Is this the right time now?

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It is the right time?-- On paragraph 6 I was asked specifically whether the Emergency Helicopter Network Tasking Guidelines were the current version. I'm aware that within the last 48 hours Queensland Health has released an updated version for discussion. So, technically, I'm not sure how you would want that to read - as part of this.

Have you seen that updated version?-- Briefly. We haven't had a chance to review and make comment on them yet.

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Okay. We'll take that up later on?-- Okay. And just in paragraph 10 - sorry, a couple of colloquialisms there which I should correct. The QCC, that's the incorrect acronym. It is actually the Queensland Emergency Medical Co-Ordination Centre.

Sorry, when you're referring to that, 10(i)?-- Yeah, correct.

And what needs to be amended?-- The QCC - it's actually the Queensland Emergency Medical Service Co-Ordination Centre, not the Clinical Co-Ordination Centre. It is just incorrect.

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Okay?-- And then (iii), AusSAR is the colloquialism - sorry, that's what we refer to - in fact, the agency is AMSAR, which is the Australian Maritime Safety Authority, so technically, in (iii), it should refer to the Australian Maritime Safety Authority.

So, where you've have got AusSAR, it should be AMSAR?-- AusSAR is a section within AMSAR.

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Anything else, Mr Delany? Madam Commissioner, I tender that statement.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 362.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 362"

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MS WILSON: Now, EMQ Helicopter Rescue is, you say, simply a provider of services to various agencies?-- Correct.

Can you tell me how this works? So, EMQ has got some helicopters - five helicopters?-- Yes.

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And how does that provide these helicopters - the helicopter services to other agencies?-- We are part of the emergency helicopter network that is administered by Queensland Health now. We are also tasked by QPS for search and rescue - other tasking - SERT tasking and so forth. We can be tasked by QFRS, also by AusSAR, AMSAR for offshore maritime or beacon searches for aircraft beacons and so forth.

We'll get to the - how that tasking occurs in a moment?-- Sure.

20

You say that in July 2010, the control and administration of the emergency helicopter network was transferred to Queensland Health?-- Correct.

Who previously had the control and administration of the emergency helicopter network?-- EMQ.

EMQ. So, EMQ did the tasking of all the helicopters?-- No, EMQ managed the network. The tasking was still done by QCC.

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Okay. Do you know why this change occurred?-- Policy decisions.

So, what responsibilities have changed in relation to EMQ in relation to the network - emergency network system?-- We no longer manage the system.

And by "managing" the system, what does that mean?-- The - there would be a user agreement set up with the community helicopter providers. The tasking guidelines, as I mentioned before - the latest version that is coming out, those issues are all now owned and managed by Queensland Health.

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Whereas before you used to manage it, but the tasking occurred by Queensland Health?-- The tasking was through QCC, yeah, correct.

QCC. You have already referred to paragraph 6 and the guidelines, and you say that you have, in the last 48 hours-----?-- Yes, I was informed late on Wednesday evening that Queensland Health was releasing documents to the Commission, I believe.

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Okay. And have you seen those draft tasking guidelines?-- Yesterday, yes.

Could you have a look at this document, please? Is that the

document that you were shown?-- Yes, it appears to be. 1

It says that it is effective 2011?-- Yes.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that document.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 363.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 363" 10

COMMISSIONER: Is this the draft version?

MS WILSON: This is the draft version. We still - Mr Hall produced a 2010 draft version and this is the 2011.

COMMISSIONER: Thank you. 20

MS WILSON: Have you had an opportunity to go through this document?-- Not in depth, no, and I've had no opportunity to discuss it with our chief pilot and other senior emergency crew within our company.

So, you can't assist us in what differences are between the 2006 document that you refer to in your statement and this new document that you have just seen recently?-- Not at this point, no. As I said, we haven't had a chance to be able to fully review them or discuss them. 30

And what are the protocols when you get a document like this in relation to the review and working with other agencies to achieve a finalised document?-- We will review it from an operational aspect. As I mentioned in my statement, essentially I look after operational management for the - for our helicopters. So, we will make input operationally as to how that - what these will impact, and if it addresses areas that we may or may - that may rise up in discussion within our own crews, we will then put those forward then as a submission back to Queensland Health, and it will be discussed in an appropriate form later on. If there's policy implications, that will be handled above my level. 40

How long does this process usually take?-- I don't know.

Haven't done it before?-- No.

Paragraph 10 describes the tasking agencies and the circumstances when helicopters can be tasked by these various agencies. Now, what is QCC's role in centralised tasking in relation to these tasking agencies that are outlined in paragraph 10?-- QCC has all of the helicopters available to QCC for tasking as part of the emergency helicopter network. 50

Can we just stop there. Do you know how many helicopters are available to QCC?-- Through the network, there's our machine,

Sunshine Coast, the Careflight machines, the Torres Strait machines, CQ's machines.

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Can you give us a number?-- Off the top of my head, sorry, no, no. And it will depend on serviceability levels on the day as to how many are available to the network on any given day.

Okay, so there is-----?-- I don't manage that network. I'm just a provider to the network.

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So - but there's a pool of helicopters available to QCC?-- Correct.

And continue from when I interrupted you?-- So, as I've referred to later in the statements, certainly we're supportive of us in a point-tasking type avenue, and there needs to be continuing policy and guidelines towards that, as I've made clear in my statement there. It would appear that, as I said, we haven't had a chance to thoroughly review this other document effective 2011, but we would hope that's a step in that direction.

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Perhaps if we can work on the present situation as you know it?-- Sure.

QPS or QFRS could task an EMQ helicopter?-- Yes.

In what circumstances?-- Search and rescue. There may be - for fire and rescue, there may have been a requirement for aerial observation and support. We do offshore - I mean, it's happening on a daily basis - we may be - two days ago we were offshore 30 miles off Townsville rescuing two guys out of the water, which is an AusSAR task. So, we can be tasked depending on the requirements at the time.

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And you were tasked directly from these agencies?-- Yes.

And what is the role of the QCC to monitor these taskings that you have received from these agencies?-- As it stands at the moment, our crews will advise QCC, and, for example, there may be a medical support requirement with the task. For example, if there's a requirement to react to a boat offshore, that may come from the Maritime Police or AusSAR. If there's the possibility that there's someone injured on the boat, then our crew would talk with QCC and seek their advice as to who was the most appropriate person to go with the machine. It might be the doctor, it might be the paramedic.

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I'm just interested to know - we talked about a pool of helicopters available. Does any one agency know where any one of these helicopters are at a given point in time?-- QCC does.

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So, you would tell QCC, "We are doing this."?-- Yes.

And then they would know that that asset is not available?-- Correct. QCC should be informed, yes.

In paragraph 15 - paragraph 15 refers to, "EMQ is responsible for tasking during a disaster event."-- Yes. I mean, that's an overarching - I mean, talking through your DDCs or your local disaster management groups, they will be tasking us, so - for support to the disaster, if you like.

The QPS retain a responsibility for search and rescue tasking during a disaster event?-- Correct, if a SAR goes off, then QPS will be reacting quickly to get SAR support, and if they need us, then they will be grabbing us to go and do the rescue.

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But with EMQ - you say EMQ has the responsibility for tasking during a disaster event. It still has to be referred up to QCC to get approval?-- They will liaise. It will depend on the situation at the time. For example, during the week of the 10th - January - and subsequent throughout that week, we had our two helicopters essentially during daylight hours allocated away from QCC to QPS through the major incident room for search - or search and rescue duties for the week.

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So, at that point in time, two helicopters are taken out of the QCC pool?-- Correct.

So QCC will have no responsibility for tasking those helicopters for that period of time?-- Correct. However, if urgent tasking came through QCC for example, we do - we respond to primary - which are road accidents, for example - which to us, you know - or to everyone are very high priority jobs as well. So, if during that time - for example, during the week, we were being tasked by QPS through the major incident room, if QCC had have needed us to respond to a life-threatening primary, they would have contacted QPS and negotiated us to go and do that job for them. So, the two agencies would talk to each other and then task us to go and do it.

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Did you hear the evidence of Mr Hall who just gave evidence before you?-- No. No, I didn't, sorry.

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You're supportive of the establishment of a single point tasking?-- Yes.

Isn't that what you've got now?-- No, no.

Why is that?-- At the moment, there will be discussion - or there may be a discussion between - as given evidence previously by one of our pilots, on the morning of the 11th-----

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That's Mr Mark Kempton?-- Yes, by Kempo - sorry, Mark, yes, correct. Where, essentially, our crews that are involved in the debate or the discussion, we are supportive to move that discussion away from - from - from our crews. And keep it at an agency level so that we are simply doing our job. It's a-----

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COMMISSIONER: Presently if there are competing priorities, who has the last say?-- It may get elevated, Madam Commissioner, but it's a grey area.

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Elevated to where? What do you mean?-- For example, during the - during the flood season, if there was debate, it would get elevated. I would speak with one of our state directors - or, sorry, the state director for retrievals to say, "Hey, we've got these to situations going on", and normally there would be an obvious avenue to take. However, it is a grey area which is why we're supportive of cleaning it up via a singing point tasking.

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Just help me with this. The state director for retrievals, is that a person in EMQ?-- No, no. No, Queensland Health, yes.

Queensland Health?-- Yes.

So Queensland Health prevail, effectively, do they?-- Predominantly, yes.

Predominantly. I'm still not really clear how the final decision is made? If it goes up the chain, where does it stop? What's the ultimate call, who makes it?-- It would be at that level the state - the state director from Queensland Health. So I mean - and up to my level on - within our company, if you like, within EMQ Helicopters it would come up to my level.

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If it has to go to the State Director Retrievals, how time consuming is that?-- It's a phone call.

So you have this sort argy-bargy between the two agencies and then it goes to him or her?-- Correct. That's how it's been working, yes.

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Does that happen much, that you have to go to the state level?-- Look, it's not - it's not that common and I think - I think it's a valid point to make that through, without a doubt, an extraordinary summer period with hundreds or thousands of jobs that were done, there was only - there was - certainly, there were a couple of occasions where things could have been done better and that's come up in previous evidence and I've been asked to comment on it. And that's one area we've said, yes, we would like to see from an operational prospective sorted out so that there isn't any of that doubt surrounding our crews if you like, that it is handled between the agencies.

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Thanks.

MS WILSON: You say that you're supportive of single point tasking. Which agency should have the responsibility for that single point tasking, do you see?-- Look, once again, that's a policy decision but as long as the agency has the right people and the capabilities to make those decisions, we - we're supportive of it. 1

Well, from your experience and observations which agency do you see should have responsibility for being the single point - to have the responsibility of single point tasking?-- It's----- 10

COMMISSIONER: You can just express an opinion. It is not as if anybody is going to hold you to it?-- Sure, sure. As I said in here, following - if the policy is right and the resourcing is correct so the right people are doing it, yeah, we would be supportive of QCCC - of Health having that but, once again, that's a policy decision.

Are the people right on the present state of the agencies as you know it? Do they have the better output to do it?-- That's quite a leading question, Madam Commissioner. There's - there's a lot of policy discussions and that. Once again, that's above my level. 20

MS WILSON: I have nothing further, Madam Commissioner.

MR KELLY: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Dunning? 30

MR DUNNING: No questions.

MR PORTER: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Ms Brien?

MS BRIEN: No questions, thank you.

COMMISSIONER: Mr MacSporran. 40

MR MacSPORRAN: Mr Delany, just a couple of things. The use of helicopters in performing rescues in swift water situations is an extremely dangerous operation, is it not?-- I wouldn't use the word "dangerous" because we don't do dangerous things with our helicopters. I would use the word that it's a very challenging task. In aviation management, what we do for challenging tasks like that, we put in place procedures, training and mitigating factors. If it was dangerous, we wouldn't do it. It's challenging. But it's within our - you know, we're happy with the risks. There is risk in a lot of the stuff we do. We mitigate that risk and manage that risk. I should clarify as well, swift rescuers, that's QFRS, the swiftys, that's their job and they're doing a very, very good job of it. Our job typically, as a bus driver, we would deliver the swiftys to the job and they would to the job. 50

What needs to be realised is the events of this previous summer, some of the swift water environments that our crews were operating in was because the swift water was five miles wide.

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Yes?-- So there is no chance for the swiftys to setup and do what they would traditionally do in a swollen creek. So - so the extreme nature of some of the events is the reasons why we were involved in certain circumstances. But swift water rescue is Queensland Fire and Rescue swiftys' job and they do it very well.

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Yes. In my enthusiasm earlier in the week I was cross-examining a firefighter and I suggested to him that there was a helicopter lost off Townsville during a challenging operation. Is it correct to say that the helicopter wasn't lost but it was in an extremely challenging situation?-- Yes, there certainly wasn't a helicopter lost at all. So, yeah, I noticed that. I made a couple of calls to make sure we hadn't and I can assure you that that hasn't happened.

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You don't need a replacement helicopter for that vehicle anyway. That's still intact, that vehicle?-- Correct.

That asset?-- Correct.

Commissioner, just for completeness, I should indicate that appears at page 1660 when Mr Dixon was being questioned. So that should be noted that's incorrect.

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COMMISSIONER: Thanks, Mr MacSporran.

MS O'GORMAN: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Ms O'Gorman? Ms Wilson?

MS WILSON: I have no re-examination. May Mr Delany be excused.

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COMMISSIONER: Thanks, Mr Delany, you're excused.

WITNESS EXCUSED

MS WILSON: I call Anthony Muyt.

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ANTHONY PETER MUYT, ON AFFIRMATION, EXAMINED:

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MS WILSON: Can you tell this Commission of Inquiry your full name?-- My full name is Anthony Peter Muyt.

You currently work for the Department of Environment and Resource Management?-- That's correct.

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And you're a marine park ranger?-- That's correct.

You made a statement for the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry?-- That's correct.

Can I show you this statement, please. Is this your statement?-- Yes, it is.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that document.

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COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 364.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 364"

MS WILSON: Now, can you tell us the duties of a marine park ranger?-- The duties of a marine park ranger are varied depending on - on what your classification is. My classification is a 005 marine park ranger. My duties are mixed, in relation to I have also got-----

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COMMISSIONER: Mr Muyt, I am going to have to slow you down?-- Sorry. Sorry.

Your duties are also mixed I think you said?-- Yes. Yes, Madam Commissioner. My duties are mixed. My role itself, I also manage several projects. General marine park, so looking at probably a 50/50 time share in relation to 50 per cent out in the field-----

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MS WILSON: If you can just slow down because every word that you are taking is being recorded?-- Okay. Sorry. 50 per cent of the time I'm out in the field doing general marine park duties in relation to education, compliance and monitoring. The other 50 per cent I would say would be with project management, dealing with several projects that I - I manage.

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Now, the point that you raise in your statement is that the Department of Environment and Resource Management has skills that might have direct application to situations of emergency management?-- That's correct.

And within your own region, which is the Moreton Bay region, the Department of Environment and Resource Management has much equipment, vessels, vehicles and so on, which could have been

of assistance during the floods?-- That's correct.

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In your statement you express concerns that staff and resources were not deployed to assist with such tasks?-- That's correct.

At paragraph 7 of your statement, that paragraph refers to you contacting the coastguard and the water police?-- That's correct.

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The response, though, from your manager was that you were not trained for such situations and your manager's view was that safety of staff was a priority?-- That's correct.

There are tasks, though, that you believe that you and others could have performed during the flooding events?-- That's correct.

Like sandbagging and assisting in evacuations that do not necessarily raise safety concerns?-- That's - that's correct. And even with vessels, I believe there's things we could have assisted with.

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And looking forward, your concerns, you say, could be addressed if the park rangers could get further training with EMQ?-- If - if I may elaborate?

Mmm?-- I don't believe there's a lot of training. That's already with - with emergency services that has already been undertaken in relation to clearing debris and that's probably from being on the water in a flood event situation. I have it on good authority that is the case. It is just they're expected to get out there and do it. I believe if there is - if there is further training we can do, that would be fantastic but I'm not sure what capacity that might be in relation to, potentially, search and rescue. But in somewhere like the Brisbane River, search and resource is, I mean, ultimately coordinated by the police and search and rescue in an environment such as the Brisbane River is not particularly wide and we could have been designated to an area to assist with something like that. So it could have also been on the ground learning. But as far as what training is available, that would have to be to - to other agencies such as EMQ to - to elaborate on. But from my knowledge, there is not any training to deal with a flood situation in the Brisbane River for emergency services. As in - as in specific flood training, operating vessels.

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Would you be envisaging that if there are any future flood events, that you and your vessel could operate in the Brisbane River clearing debris?-- Yes, potentially, but not necessarily with our vessels. It could also be that we - we assist being crew on other vessels, whether it be police, whatever it might be, so that we can help with the fatigue issues and things like that. We have a lot of experienced crew - a lot of experienced skippers, from masters 4, masters 5 and coxswains, they're commercially qualified skippers, ship masters, and we could assist at the very at least as crew.

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I have no further questions.

MR KELLY: No questions, Madam Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Porter?

MR PORTER: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Ms Brien?

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MS BRIEN: No questions, thank you.

COMMISSIONER: Mr MacSporran.

MR MacSPORRAN: Thank you, Commissioner. Mr Muyt, you're essentially disappointed that the resources you understood were available weren't used in a more productive way?-- Yeah, productive - yeah, you say disappointed, yes.

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But in expressing that view you do acknowledge, don't you, appropriately, that you're not fully aware, nor could you be, of discussions at management level, communications at management level about the use of those resources?-- That's correct.

And you understand there is a framework in place that has to be adhered to when a disaster of this kind unfolds?-- I - to - to an extent, yes, but I think with a disaster of this extent and magnitude, that incident - that - that process was stretched and staggered - what could I say, stretched and fragmented. And from talking to other - other people involved with the clean-up - sorry, involved with the actual response in other emergency services, a lot of command on the ground was taking the initiative and calling people, seeing whether they were used and that side of things. So I believe, yes, there is a process but often that process can get in the way and it is a time frame, which, you know, time is critical in these sort of scenarios.

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Yes?-- And I believe that, yeah, more initiative should be taken in relation to management saying, "Well, okay, command and communications is broken at this stage", which was the stage.

Yes?-- The regional manager at the time did have difficulty speaking with upper management, and I know for a fact there were people on the ground that required assistance and we weren't doing anything.

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Yes. When you say "we weren't doing anything", it wasn't through a deliberate decision to not assist. It was just that you - as you perceived it in your area, there was a lack of timely deployment of available resources?-- Yes, but from - from discussions with - well, not discussions but communications such as e-mails with the regional manager at

the time, Miles Yeates, and I do understand, again, safety is a big consideration and that's utmost in everything for everyone in all organisations, however he - not he. I won't target him because that's not what it's about. But I believe that our resources could have been - it is a case of rather than waiting to be asked, is to offer our assistance from the ground, especially when a magnitude that we experienced was - was so great and to contact him. So I understand the process that's involved but it is more about taking initiative in these sort of scenarios - in these sort of situations. And I've been keeping, you know, reasonably abreast of the Commission and some of the evidence that's been given and it seems to be that people did need help and were not receiving it.

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When you say it is a matter of taking initiative, that's all very well and works wonderfully well where someone who takes their own initiative outside the formal arrangements is able to cope with the situation they find themselves in. It works well in that situation, doesn't it?-- Could you elaborate on where you're leading, please.

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Yes. You have a background as a - before you became part of this current organisation you were a police officer in the New South Wales force?-- That's correct.

Having training in that field?-- Again, the training is very limited in these sort of things and it is more about they give you the basics and then they expect you to go out there and operate, and - and you do and you have some basic structure, but it is more about using initiative and using commonsense and discretion in your operations and the way you work and address each situation as need be.

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In any event, I think you have alluded to it, you recognise that the department's concern in an overall sense was for the safety and welfare of the staff?-- Oh, absolutely, but I'm sure the Commissioner of Police had - his concern would have been the welfare of his staff and likewise the SES and that - that's - that goes without saying.

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Can I show you an e-mail, if I could, please, or an e-mail chain I suppose. Do you recall there was a - you communicated your concerns to the department through your appropriate channels, didn't you?-- Yes, that's correct.

And then there was a series of e-mails generated in that context. The one on the front there on the 12th of January, it doesn't - yes, you are copied in, I think?-- Yes.

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And Miles Yeates, was that your immediate manager or supervisor?-- At the time he was, yes. He is the regional - or at the time he was the regional manager of Moreton Bay Region.

Now, this dot point formulation from him is in essence in answer to the concerns you raised in your e-mail earlier it seems?-- That's correct, yes.

I won't take you through it but it appears from the tone of that response that he - he was effectively saying that the appropriate people in the management arrangements had been informed of the resources available of your organisation?-- That's - that's correct, yes.

And that because many of the members if not the majority of them in your organisation hadn't been trained to undertake the sort of tasks that you were concerned about equipment not being deployed to, safety issues arose?-- If I may, this isn't the full e-mail chain. There is one more e-mail which I sent in reply.

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In reply to this?-- Yes.

Yes. I'm not challenging or querying or taking issue with your genuine belief that more could have been done?-- Yes.

I'm just wanting to highlight what the department response to you was?-- Yeah, absolutely. But in my response to what the department said, there's numerous things that we could have done in relation to-----

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That wouldn't have offended these concerns?-- Wouldn't have required training. And the reality is, yes - yes - you know, I fully command Miles for following the chain of command and that sort of thing but in this thing the chain of command is extremely stressed and broken in some instances.

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Yes?-- So this is where I believe regional management on the ground and a good manager will take initiative and contact other emergency organisations and say, "Look, this is what we've got on the ground." And in cases like that, that did occur.

Yes?-- I know for a fact - I've spoken to police officers where that has occurred, where - where they from - EMQ, Emergency Management Queensland, had been designated to an area and had just basically sat there all day and they weren't used, so - yet people required help. An initiative was taken by the commanders on the ground, police, that then reallocated those resources. In relation to the training - so, yes, I do believe that and I understand, okay, we were aware. So that satisfied the fact that EMQ were aware but my - my general feeling and the idea was that not just being aware but being used and there's numerous roles we could be used. In my response to this, I actually have my response, if I may get that out, I'll-----

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Yes, certainly. I was going to tender this e-mail chain and we can perhaps add - do you have a copy of yours we can add to this?-- I do but I only have one, one copy.

Perhaps we can arrange to have copied here and add it to this bundle. But if you want to talk about that now with the Commissioner's leave, by all means go ahead and deal with that.

COMMISSIONER: You do have a copy of your e-mail?--  
Madam Commissioner, yes, yes.

Do you need to keep it or can we have it?-- You could have it but I could read it for you if you like or if you want to photocopy it or whatever might - whatever you wish to do.

Well, unless you're really attached to it we might just make it an exhibit. But you can tell us the gist of it now if you like?-- It is basically in response to this - in response to this response from Miles Yeates, was the fact that there were so many things we could do. There are numerous - numerous things we could do from going out with our four-wheel drives, even if we didn't even go onto the river, and assist with evacuation - evacuating people. The prime example that I use was on Friday January the 14th when teams did actually go into the field to assist with the cleanup, the crews assisted a lady, and I actually put this in my initial submission, at Bulimba and they did a fantastic job in helping her clean her premises and remove the furniture and then use the fire pumps on the back of the four-wheel drives to clean her property, the house, as best they could. They did fantastic job; she was extremely grateful. However, imagine if they had have been there a day earlier or two days earlier and were able to use those resources, our four-wheel drives, which are utes - many of them are utes, the majority are utes and majority are four-wheel drives - to remove her belongings? Not only does it - it helped this lady out, it reduces pollution, it reduces everything because that stuff has to then be thrown out. And that could have been done everywhere. As we saw in the media and as - statement after statement is people just went out and helped-----

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COMMISSIONER: Draw breath, Mr Muyt, draw breath?-- Sorry, Madam Commissioner.

Just so that the reporter can keep up?-- Yep, apologies.

Do you want those e-mails as one exhibit or would you like yours as one and Mr Muyt's as another?

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MR MacSPORRAN: No, I think it is appropriate they be together. Yours is dated the same day or is it the following day?-- The same day - hang on. No this, was 6.04 p.m. I was then off the next day. I replied the next morning, I replied to that e-mail I believe.

The 13th is your reply?-- Sorry?

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The 13th?-- Yes.

COMMISSIONER: But they're a sequence, are they?

MR MacSPORRAN: They should be together, yes. Directly in response to the one the previous evening. So I tender that bundle of e-mails.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 365.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 365"

COMMISSIONER: Mr Muyt, you refer in one of yours to being ICS trained. What's that stand for?-- Incident command and control systems. So it's basically an organisational structure which is - which is designed to ensure emergency management is dealt with on a common ground, so has a set structure, and that's the sort of training. So throughout emergency management organisations. That's what I'm under the belief, that occurs there. And that occurs, from what I've led to believe, all over Australia in different states. However, some states, and I believe New South Wales - well, when I was part of the New South Wales police, we had a similar structure but it wasn't exactly the same and from terminology and things like that. But it is designed so that different organisations can work together and there is a set - a set structure.

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All right, thank you for that.

MR MacSPORRAN: Thank you.

COMMISSIONER: If I can get those e-mails then. Have you handed yours over?-- Madam Commissioner, it might just take a minute or two to locate it. I have a bit of a-----

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I assume you have copies if you want it?-- Yes. Yes, Madam Commissioner, thank you.

MR MacSPORRAN: I have nothing further, thank you.

MS O'GORMAN: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Thank you.

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MS WILSON: No re-examination.

COMMISSIONER: If you're having trouble finding it, Mr Muyt, would you do this for. Just go and take a seat, turn it up. When you've found it give it to Ms Grant there and we'll add it to the exhibits, thanks.

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WITNESS EXCUSED

MS WILSON: Madam Commissioner, are you taking a morning break?

COMMISSIONER: This might be a good time for the morning

break. We will come back at a quarter to.

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THE COMMISSION ADJOURNED AT 11.24 A.M.

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THE COMMISSION RESUMED AT 11.45 A.M.

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COMMISSIONER: Yes, Ms Wilson?

MS WILSON: Thank you, Madam Commissioner. I call Christopher Arnold.

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CHRISTOPHER JOHN ARNOLD, SWORN AND EXAMINED:

MS WILSON: Is your full name Christopher John Arnold?-- Correct.

And you're the Executive General Manager of Network Performance by Energex?-- Correct.

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And from the 4th to the 17th of January 2011, you were the Acting Chief Executive Officer for Energex?-- That's correct.

Now, you've made a statement to the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry dated the 5th of April 2011?-- Mmm.

Would you have a look at this document, please? That is your statement?-- Correct.

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Commissioner, I tender that document.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 366.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 366"

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MS WILSON: And you have also made an additional statement - supplementary statement to the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry dated the 29th of April 2011?-- That's correct.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that document?-- Exhibit 367.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 367"

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MS WILSON: Now, do you have copies of those statements in front of you?-- I do.

Now, if you can go to the first statement? And if we can go to the first issue of pre-emptive disconnection of supply?-- Mmm.

The rationale by the pre-emptive disconnection of supply is stated in paragraph 19 of that statement?-- Yes.

And it is driven by two factors: the first is the need to prioritise the safety of people above all other factors, and then to assist in a timely reconnection of supply to reduce the potential for damage to assets?-- That's right.

Which feeds into the issue of - that is raised in paragraph 22 that, from a reconnection perspective, power is disconnected to allow sufficient time for Energex crews to remove critical plant prior to inundation?-- That's correct.

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So if that plant is removed, then that will assist in getting resupply up and running early - early as possible?-- That's correct. That was particularly applicable in the Brisbane CBD, for example, where there is certain equipment that if it can be removed, it facilitates more speedy restoration in the final process.

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And was that achieved, to be able to remove the critical plant?-- In the main, yes. There were a couple of issues where we didn't fully achieve that in the timely constraints, but, in the main, yes, that pre-emptive removal was of great value and we did achieve speedy restoration.

And is - to remove this plant so that itself doesn't get flooded and damaged?-- Correct. So, for example, there's critical electronic equipment that if it gets flooded, it would - we would have to resupply that, source that from somewhere else and reinstall that, whereas if you can remove that and put the same items back in, that process is much more simple to do.

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Has any consideration been given to make these plants effectively flood-proof so that you don't have to go that extra step of removing that equipment?-- There's a couple of issues on the flood proofing. For example, in Brisbane CBD, there's a lot of existing premises - buildings - that are in basements, and we have argued over the years with many of those - you know, building owners, to get the plant up to a flood-proof level. However, that's not always successful. I think one of the key issues that - that is by way of background here is that our infrastructure essentially has to supply wherever there are customers, so wherever customers choose to take electricity supply, then our infrastructure must follow. So, for example, if there's a suburb that's flood-prone, of necessity, electricity infrastructure needs to be all through that suburb, and that, in itself, means that we can't always flood-proof all of those assets. We are, however, working - and particularly moving forward - looking at the resilience of some of those buildings in the inner Brisbane CBD, for example. So, it may not be possible to relocate our substation in every case, but it may be possible to relocate parts of that infrastructure or, indeed, to provide external generator connection points, for example, or relocate the customer's own switchboard. So, that, in total,

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for that building, there is an overall flood resilience. 1

That will require some planning and preparation?-- Correct.

And can that be achieved in the short term, or is that a long-term goal?-- That's certainly a longer term goal. We would certainly be seeking, before next summer, to have conversations with many of those critical buildings, but that overall redevelopment of the network, if you like, and improving the flood resilience of any of those sites will take longer periods. 10

You talked before about when development is done in flood-prone areas. When that occurs, they are often greenfield sites in that they are starting from scratch?-- Correct.

Therefore, Energex could, with proper infrastructure planning, design around that to ensure the greatest protection that it can for its own plant?-- We could - although, again, it depends on the item of plant you're talking about - for a major substation - and we had several of those inundated in January 2011 - we can put those in sites - or provide greater flood resilience at those major sites, but when you're talking down within the actual suburb, of necessity, many items of equipment and plant need to be located where the customers are, if you like. So, there's some things that we can do, but there are still many assets that will - if the entire suburb goes under, so will the assets. 20

When you're going down into the suburb, as you say, and there's plant down in the suburb, when you get warning about impending floods, do you take that equipment out as well?-- No. Look, that's not practical, because we're talking literally hundreds of major transformers, you're talking, perhaps, 100,000, you know, items of - things like pillars, for example, that are fixed pieces of infrastructure. It is simply not practical to remove those. 30

So, if that gets wet and flooded, does that affect the timeliness of resupply?-- In some cases. If a transformer installation - you know those green boxes that often sit on the footpath, known as Padmount transformers, if those are deeply inundated, then during the floods we had to, from memory, recover, repair and replace about 100 of those. That was a relatively fast process, but it still does take time. Some of the lesser items of plant - for example, pillars that sit on the footpath - are relatively easy to sort out - hosing out, for example. 40

How will Energex improve the flood resilience of its plant?-- We have got a range of proposals. So, for example, I talked about those major substations. 50

Yes?-- We had four that were inundated: Archerfield, Jindalee, Oxley and Milton. We relied upon - for those major substations - the Q100 level as it was previously known prior to the 2011 floods, and any work that we did at those

substations we always maintained above the Q100 level. However, that was found to be insufficient during the 2011 floods because the flood levels in some of those areas went higher than the previously known Q100. So, in those particular four major substations, which were a significant impact, we are looking at specific plans for those. Those plans haven't been finalised yet and they will involve some significant expenditure to raise items of plant, perhaps building bunding walls around some parts of the substation to improve the resilience of those.

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And the effect being - if there is another flood event?-- If we had another flood event after completion of that work, that would substantially improve the resilience to a similar flood event. Of course, if the flood, you know, goes substantially higher, that would still be a problem, but - so, we rely upon those flood levels to establish where we need to build plant.

If these works were done, and if there was another flood event, how would the residents of Brisbane - how would that affect the residents of Brisbane in terms of their electricity supply?-- There would be speedier restoration in some instances. I think I mentioned before the Archerfield substation. There were some parts of that suburb that were somewhat delayed because of the repairs to the Archerfield substation. I would note, however, that many of those businesses were severely inundated, so many of those businesses were coming on still a long time after we affected repairs to that area. So, there is an impact, and I think work is worthwhile, but it is not a guarantee you will overcome any flooding issues, because the businesses themselves, when they get inundated, they have their own electrical equipment inside their premises which needs to be cleared/cleaned before it can be re-energised.

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Paragraph 27 refers to that Energex prepared plans on the basis that disconnection of supply might become necessary in some areas. So, at this point in time, you're getting information, and the implementation of the plan, you say in your statement, changed frequently in the 48 hours from the Sunday, that you're getting information that there's going to be a likely flood event?-- Correct.

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And that information is coming through and changing rapidly and different plans are having to be undertaken?-- Yes. So, our basic flood plan was based upon the Q100 flood modelling. So, we'd worked out a plan on that basis. However, during the January the 10th, the Monday, and January the 11th, the Tuesday, the flood forecast developed rapidly up to, I think, about 3.30 p.m. on Tuesday the 11th when the first statement was made that this event would be similar to the 1974 flood level. So, at that point, these forecasts then exceeded our initial flood planning and we had to move into a different mode, if you like.

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Where you say that Energex was preparing plans, what about preparing the community for possible pre-emptive disconnection?-- Yes. So, I mentioned the rapidly developing

nature of the flood forecasts. We provided - once we became aware that this was going to be a significant flood - which was late on the 11th of January - we issued several press releases. So, I think there's one in my statement which was issued at about 5 p.m. relating to 100,000 customers plus the Brisbane CBD would be impacted. We couldn't, at that stage, identify exactly everywhere where the flood would occur, and we referenced in that press release the Brisbane City Council and Ipswich City Council websites for people to get additional information about likely areas of inundation, and we issued subsequent press releases through that day, and also through into the 12th of January. Those broad, you know, mass media press releases got a significant coverage. We did a very large number of media interviews on the 11th of January, and on the 12th of January there were more than 30 television/radio interviews between Ipswich, the Brisbane CBD and Brisbane suburbs. In addition, that was covered in the SEQ - South-East Queensland newspapers. So, there was a great deal of coverage for the mass community. In addition to that, we have a 24 hour contact centre, and we were encouraging people to contact us if they wanted more detailed information, and we had a lot of detailed scripting about safety information-----

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Could it be possible for residents in a flood event to be able to go to a central point of information source and see, "Look, if the river heights or the water heights reach this level, then this - my property will be affected in this way in relation to power supply.", or is that possible?-- Look, I think it is possible. There is a big proviso in there that the flood is highly predictable in terms of flood heights at various parts of the river, and that we get adequate notice of those flood heights. The issue that occurred in January 2011 was the flood height forecast changed a lot and they changed at a rapid pace. So, it was not feasible for us to identify exactly where those points of concern might be, but it is possible if you've got that stability of information about the flood height.

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And would Energex consider implementing such an information source?-- Indeed. In our flood plan, we could, for example, publish that flood plan and make that information available to key agencies or to the public based on the height that was expected; however, again, with the proviso that that's highly forecastable.

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In terms of the de-energising process, it comes down to a timing issue - ultimately comes down to a timing issue of when that occurs?-- Correct.

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And it is a balancing act between competing priorities?-- Correct.

On the one hand you have got to go sufficiently early to allow safe asset removal, but on the other hand you want it as late as possible to minimise customer inconvenience?-- That's right.

How is that decision process worked out? Not in a technical sense, but is that done manually, is that done automatically about when that decision is made?-- No, look, it is done by people assessing the emerging situation, and that was - that decision was really part of our corporate emergency management process. So, we have a corporate emergency management team. There's a crisis controller. That crisis controller was convening regular meetings of experts who understood the implications of all those things - the flood levels and the customer implications - and a balance of objectives was being made by that process.

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When substations are de-energised-----?-- Yes.

-----that may ensure that properties that are not flooded may also be - may be de-energised and properties that will be flooded or are flooded are de-energised?-- Correct.

Can that process be configured differently to allow properties that are not being flooded to ensure those properties to have electricity supply?-- Not simply. Our network - on one explanation - extends from central points known as zone substations, and we have high voltage - 11,000 volt feeders that feed out from those central points, and those lines, of necessity, follow the terrain to get to the extremities of those lines and that feeds out in a web, if you like, from that central point. So, if you need to traverse through a flooded area, then it's virtually impossible to avoid that disconnection of the people further down the line. Sometimes switching can be arranged to reconnect the people in the dry area. One of our proposals, which I think is a good one, is, following this flood event, we're having a look at some of those dry islands, if you like, and there are a number of those that occurred through the flood events, and we could use generators hooked on to those dry parts, and isolate those from the rest of the network. So, that's an issue we are having a look at for the future, but I think it would be very difficult to guarantee that none of the network ever went through those flooded parts.

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And how those islands, as you refer to them, could be isolated. A substation put in those islands, is that how that is done?-- Potentially, or probably more likely you would arrange a generator connection point, so that a generator could be transported into that island providing you can get access, and supply from that generator, which is, in essence, like a substation.

In terms of it re-energising, how is re-energising prioritised?-- Okay. So, in terms of our restoration process, we had a number of priorities. We were given some indication of those from some of the Local Disaster Management Groups about critical infrastructure, for example, so that was right at the top of the priority list, and we had a number of those instances where there were water supply sites, for example, that needed to be - to be reconnected rapidly. So, that was right up the top of the list. Other sites were often identified by, again, the local councils, through the Local

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Disaster Management Group process, things such as communication facilities or critical business. Thirdly, we have a lot of our own priority customers, things such as hospitals, nursing homes, and, beyond that, it's really sort of suburb by suburb, and I think in one of my statements I described the process whereby we assign a team to go through suburb by suburb, inspecting assets to ensure there's no damage from the floods, and then performing reconnection as appropriate.

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You discussed before the strategic deployment of generators. In the flood plan you've got, there is a flood plan that refers to the strategic deployment of generators and that identifies Bellbowrie, Karana Downs, Moggill, Pullenvale as communities at risk of being isolated in a major event?-- Yes.

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What deployment, if any, was there of the generators to these far western suburbs?-- Yes, look, in those suburbs there's actually, I believe, five high voltage feeders supplying into that broad Moggill area. All of those were impacted in some way by the serious floods that occurred through fallen trees or fallen powerlines, wash aways of creeks and so on, and the road access was also similarly impacted. So we had no generation on the inside of that - of that island, if you like, in advance of the flood. And as we restored that area, it was really - we had generation available and we were in the process of deploying that, but one of the supplies, one of those main supplies in was ultimately reconnected first. So - and access to get into the place was really the major factor there as to why the generation was not first deployed.

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So is this a planning and preparation issue?-- Look, it could be. I think in hindsight-----

Get those generators into these communities before they can get isolated?-- Yes. And, look, I think we didn't foresee that one because are five in-feeds into there and I don't think we could have reasonably been expected to think that all five of those would - would incur problems. However-----

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Well, your flood plan identifies it?-- Yes, as a - as a potential islanded area. However, we would expect that one of those supplies should stay. However, I think we have to have a look at that area, for example, to identify do we get generators there pre-emptively or, instead, do we ensure that one of those high voltage feeders is extremely flood proof and we can maintain supply through one of those high voltage feeders.

How would you make such a high voltage feeder flood proof?-- Underground in parts of it, across waterways, for example. So that, you know - the problems that we incurred through the process were that poles adjacent to some of those waterways were impacted by the floods. So undergrounding a substantial portion of that would assist that flood resilience.

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So is Energex looking at the isolation issues that occurred in these far western suburbs?-- Yes.

And taking steps to better prepare for any further flooding?-- We're certainly having a look at the resilience of that particular area, yes.

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If I can take you to your second statement, your second statement effectively addresses issues raised in a submission by the Ipswich City Council?-- Mmm-hmm.

You have seen the statement from Anthony Trace, the Local

District Coordinator from the Ipswich City Council?-- Yes.

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In that statement he refers back to the submission?-- Yes.

But he states that three matters are emphasised?-- Yes.

The third matter is of interest today. He considers the key issues arising out of the flood events to be those identified at paragraphs 9.62, and that's referring back to his submission, which refers to the forward planning so as to ensure in far as it is reasonably practical, that in a future flood event power can be maintained to those parts of the city that are not flood affected. You've seen that in the statement?-- Yes.

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Has Energex undertaken any steps to address the issue that was raised by Mr Trace in his statement?-- Look, not at this stage.

Can that be done? Can there be forward planning to ensure that in future flood events electricity is maintained?-- Look, as I said before, the supply of electricity goes - follows the terrain in the certain areas, so it is not always possible to provide a flood proofing of every area, and I think one of the areas here you mentioned was where the Polar Ice plant is. And I have inspected that area and it's surrounded by creeks and rivers. I guess in my view, from having looked at that, it's simply - is not possible, unless you put a generator on that little island, to make more resilient that - that particular island. So I think it is the same story, in essence, that I was talking about before. That is, it is possible to improve the resilience of certain areas, yes, but in general, where lines supply areas through other flood-prone areas, it is not possible in those instances to solve that problem completely.

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The other matter that Mr Trace emphasises in his statement, referring back to the submission, that in terms of planning for future serious flood events, the council considers that it is important to establish a clear understanding of the division of roles, responsibilities and authorities between the Ipswich LDMG, the LDC and Energex?-- Yes.

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You've seen that?-- Yes.

Now, what is Energex's view in relation to the Ipswich City Council's view of establishing the clear understanding of the division of roles and responsibilities?-- So I think through the entire floods process we worked with very many LDMGs, Local Disaster Management Groups, and demonstrated through that process that we were very willing to take reasonable requests from those LDMGs. There's a number of examples of where we did that including at Ipswich and doing every effort to rapidly restore supply to - to major sites. You know, there's some good examples, for example the Brisbane Markets, the Brisbane traffic signals, there was some nursing homes I believe out at Ipswich. So we're very willing to take those reasonable requests through the LDMG process and I think we've

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demonstrated that. I think being directed by the LDMG is quite a different matter because I think there's an issue of expertise here. So, you know, we - we plan and develop and operate the electricity network and there's a whole array of legislation that surrounds that relating to safety. And so, we have to ensure that safety is not compromised by, you know, responding to an unreasonable request. But, again, certainly more than willing to take on board, you know, requests which we believe we did.

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So you're willing to take on requests but not willing to take on direction?-- I think direction is a - is a difficulty, yes.

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I have no further questions.

COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Mr Ambrose, do you have any questions.

MR AMBROSE: No questions.

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COMMISSIONER: Mr Kelly, you would probably rather go last, would you?

MR KELLY: Yes, thank you, Madam Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Porter?

MR PORTER: No questions.

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COMMISSIONER: Ms Brien.

MS BRIEN: Thank you. Mr Arnold, first off a couple of questions in relation to the attendances of Energex at Ipswich LDMG meetings?-- Yes.

Could the witness please be shown attachment ATK-4 to the statement of Anthony Trace and, in particular, LDMG-4.

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COMMISSIONER: That will be on the screen in front of you but there is a hard copy as well.

MS BRIEN: Mr Arnold, do you have in front of you a minute of an LDMG meeting that took place at 2 p.m. on Tuesday the 11th of January; is that correct?-- That's right, yes.

Would you agree with me that the list of attendees does not record an Energex employee as being in attendance?-- I think that's right. However, I would note that I did flick through a number of those LDMG minutes and I think in most of them there was no record of attendance of Energex whereas I'm advised by the staff who did attend that they were there.

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Perhaps if I could also draw to your attention - you indicated before you had a copy of your statements there in the witness box with you. In paragraph 11 of your supplementary statement

you refer to meetings that you have been advised that Energex attended?-- Yes.

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And it would appear from that statement from - if one looks at 11(a) that that is in fact after the LDMG document I'm asking you to look at at present?-- Yes, look, that - that does say evening. I don't know the precise timing of that.

Thank you. If I could ask you to have a look at page 2 of that document, the LDMG-4 document. Can you see probably midway through that document there is a statement there, "Need to contact Energex and Telstra for representatives to attend meeting"?-- Yes.

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Do you see that? Are you aware whether or not Energex received such a request?-- Look, I'm not aware of the specifics of the request but from the advice I've received, there were attendees at a range of meetings as per my statement from that evening of Tuesday the 11th of January and onwards.

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But before that period you don't have any recollection of Energex receiving a request to attend meetings?-- I don't know.

From your own information. And you're not aware through any other employees advising you of such request?-- No, look, I have only sought information about those specific meetings.

Would you be able to make any comment as to whether or not a receipt or request of that nature is likely to be the reason that Energex then commenced attendance at those LDMG meetings?-- Look, we regularly attend LDMG meetings. Indeed, one of the things that I did as acting CEO quite early in the floods process that I can report is that I asked a senior manager of mine to attend and ensure coordination of attendees for all of the LDMGs. So he, from that point onwards, maintained a roster of attendees at the LDMGs to ensure that we were attending those meetings.

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And are you aware that the peak of the flood in Ipswich was some approximately 24 hours before the peak occurred in Brisbane. So it was earlier that there was - the issues were rising in Ipswich. It was rapidly escalating in Ipswich at an earlier point in time than Brisbane, are you familiar with it?-- Look, I wouldn't know the duration in advance but, yes, broadly, it was in advance of Brisbane.

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Could the witness now be shown LDMG-7, which forms part of that attachment to Mr Trace's statement. Mr Arnold, this is a copy of a minute of an LDMG meeting held at 3 p.m. on Wednesday 12 January 2011. Do you see that?-- Yes.

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Do you agree that the list of recorded attendees does not include an Energex employee?-- That's correct.

If I could ask you to have a look at page 2 of that document. Do you see a notation at the top of that page under the

heading "Energex", "Redirection of resources, advised to make safe Brisbane. 30 crews available"?-- Yes.

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Mr Arnold, in your statement in your - sorry, in your supplementary statement at paragraph 11(c) you note that Mr Madsen attended this meeting?-- That's correct.

Have you checked with Mr Madsen as to whether or not those things were said by him that are noted in the minute of that meeting?-- Look, I haven't checked directly on that. I have no reason to doubt him however.

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So if they were said by Mr Madsen, that's likely to be a correct recording of the statements?-- I think that's right. However, I would distinguish between the make safe phase of the flood event compared with the restoration of the flood event. I think the inference in the Ipswich City Council submission was that we were redirecting crews in the restoration process. This was during the disconnection process and it is quite possible that there were crews who had done some disconnection works in the Ipswich council area who then moved into the Brisbane area. As you pointed out, the Ipswich flood peak preceded the Brisbane flood peak.

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All right. If you can put down those documents, I'll move on to another topic. In fact, the next topic is in relation to the disconnection of power to Ipswich properties that were not flood affected?-- Mmm-hmm.

Now, there has been some questions in relation to this issue by counsel assisting this morning. In paragraph 4 of your supplementary statement you state that, "Approximately 31,000 homes and businesses experienced electricity interruptions due to flooding." Do you see that in your statement?-- Yes.

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Can you just clarify, that figure of 31,000, is that for Ipswich only or is that for the whole of south-east Queensland when you're referring there?-- Look, that would be for the Ipswich area. The number for the whole of south-east Queensland would be much bigger than that.

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Now, do you accept that power was cut to approximately 4,000 Ipswich properties that were unaffected by flooding?-- I don't have that exact number. That may be right. I don't-----

Would you accept that there was quite a number of properties that power-----?-- That's possible, yes.

In your first statement in paragraphs 24 to 33 you set out in some level of detail the decision-making process for the implementation of pre-emptive disconnection of supply in relation to Brisbane?-- Yes.

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And then in paragraph 43, you just have one paragraph in relation to Ipswich?-- Yes.

Are you able to explain what was the basis of the decision to

disconnect power to properties unaffected by flooding in Ipswich?-- Those properties, as I indicated earlier, were related to high voltage supply that was associated with areas that were inundated. So it is highly probable if there were premises disconnected that were not inundated it was because their supply network emanated from or went through an area that was inundated.

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Would there be any other reasons or considerations?-- Oh, look, it was principally based around our understanding of the likely areas of inundation from, you know, a range of sources.

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Are you aware as to whether or not there was any liaison with Ipswich City Council officers before disconnecting power to those 4,000 properties that were ultimately unaffected by flood waters?-- Look, I can't answer that precisely. I expect there would have been but I don't have the records of those conversations.

On the basis of your answer that you expect that there would have been, are you able to indicate as to who it might have been likely that would have had those or at least even-----?-- I would have expected some of the local people who operate out of the Ipswich depot would have done that.

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Nothing further, thank you.

COMMISSIONER: Mr MacSporran?

MR MacSPORRAN: I have nothing, thank you.

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MS O'GORMAN: No questions.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Kelly.

MR KELLY: Thank you, Commissioner. Mr Arnold, if you go to your first statement, which is Exhibit 367, at paragraph 32 you dealt with the topic of restoration of power to the Ipswich ice works known as Polar Ice?-- Yes.

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You said in your oral evidence this morning that you've had the opportunity to visit the site?-- Correct.

Prior to giving evidence. What did you learn from the site inspection about the layout of the site?-- So a couple of things. The Polar Ice site, it may well have been by my inspection that the actual factory area of Polar Ice itself wasn't in the water. But from my inspection of the site, there was a lot of water around that area and, indeed, I spoke to a gentleman who - who was from the Polar Ice plant. He indicated, consistent with the photo that I've submitted as part of my statement, that there was significant water in the car park area and surrounding the Polar Ice area.

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As a result of the site inspection which you undertook and the information you've obtained, do you have any reason today to

doubt that the decision to disconnect was appropriate in the circumstances?-- No, look, I think given the volume of water that I observed from that photograph and the lay of the land, if you like, there is no doubt in my mind that disconnecting that area was - was appropriate.

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Can I also ask you, since preparing your supplementary statement have you had the opportunity to make further investigations and inquiries about the precise timing of disconnection and restoration of power to Polar Ice?-- Yes, I do. So I think in my statement I - I said that the supply to that general area was restored on the 13th of January at about 9.43 p.m. Since doing that, we've continued to research the specifics of the actual Polar Ice plant. Our field automation system has a job recorded at 3 p.m. on the next day, on the 14th of January. That the site had been inspected and that a form 2 as we know it, which is the form provided by the customer's electrician, was available and on site and they were able to be reconnected. We have further information from our field automation system that our crew reconnected the site at 8.45 a.m. on the 16th of January and, indeed, that's consistent with metering data we've obtained from the meters, that load was increasing at that site from 9.26 a.m. on the same day.

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So do you reach the conclusion based upon those investigations that as far as Energex's records are concerned, Polar Ice would appear to have been reconnected as at 8.45 a.m. on the 16th of January?-- Correct.

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You attended every State Disaster Management Group meeting from 8 a.m. on the 12th of January 2011 until 10 a.m. on the 21st of January 2011?-- Correct.

At each of the State Disaster Management Group meetings which you attended, was it the practice for the Local Disaster Management Groups to be dialled into those meetings?-- It was. The district disaster coordinators were on the line and my understanding was that the Local Disaster Management Groups through councils, typically, were also available to be on line.

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I want to ask you about your recollection of what issues were raised at State Disaster Management Group meetings by the Local Disaster Management Groups. Do you have any recollection of any issue being raised at any State Disaster Management Group meeting which you attended, any issue being raised in relation to Polar Ice?-- I do not. I have also sought advice from my colleague who accompanied to every one of those meetings and, similarly, he did not.

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Could I ask you, do you recall any issue being raised at any State Disaster Management Group meeting which you attended about Energex's response or performance in the Ipswich area?-- I do not.

Can I go then to Exhibit 366, your first statement, to paragraph 103 where you dealt with Energex's corporate

communications strategy and you refer to Energex's commitment to ensure that the public was well informed about issues affecting the supply of electricity?-- Yes.

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Can I show you a volume of documents which - I've given a copy of this volume, Madam Commissioner, to counsel assisting. Does that volume which you're looking at contain a record of Energex's media communication activity in respect of the floods that affected south-east Queensland in January 2011?-- That's correct.

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Could I ask you if you could open that volume to go to the second page where there is a sheet headed "Highlights" which refers to 4,874 media mentions?-- That's correct.

And below that there's a figure of \$15,162,947 worth of free media?-- That's correct.

Could I ask you to explain what that figure is meant to represent and how you understand it's being calculated?-- Look, my understanding of that figure is that it's a number calculated or estimated by the media organisation, in this case Media Monitors, to determine the equivalent value if you like of the media mentions and space that occurred through the period of the floods. I suppose the point of all of that is that we had a lot of media interest through that period and lots of communications via the mass media.

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Thank you, Madam Commissioner. May I tender that volume?

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COMMISSIONER: Yes, Exhibit 368.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 368"

MR KELLY: I have no further questions.

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COMMISSIONER: Ms Wilson?

MS WILSON: No re-examination. May the witness be excused?

COMMISSIONER: Thank you, Mr Arnold, you're excused.

WITNESS EXCUSED

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MS WILSON: I call Mr Gregory Hoffman.

GREGORY THOMAS HOFFMAN, SWORN AND EXAMINED:

MS WILSON: Can you tell the Commission of Inquiry your full name, please?-- Gregory Thomas Hoffman.

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And you're the General Manager and the Advocate of LGAQ?-- General Manager Advocate.

General Manager Advocate of LGAQ. And LGAQ has provided four documents to the Floods Commission of Inquiry?-- That's correct.

And if I can take you through each of those four documents? The LGAQ provided a submission dated the 11th of March this year?-- That's correct.

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Can you have a look at this document, please?-- Yes.

Is that the submission that LGAQ provided?-- It is.

And you authored that submission?-- Yes.

I tender that document.

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COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 369.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 369"

MS WILSON: Mr Hoffman, because we have got four documents, I need to be able to particularise them when I'm referring those documents to you, so when I'm referring to that document, that will be regarded as Submission 1?-- Yes.

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This submission was converted into a statement and that was provided to the Commission of Inquiry on the 5th of April of this year?-- That is correct.

Can you have a look at this document, please?-- Yes, that is it.

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And when I refer to that document, that will be Statement 1. And, Commissioner, I tender that document.

COMMISSIONER: Is it actually a statement by Mr Hoffman?

MS WILSON: Yes, it is.

COMMISSIONER: Thank you. Exhibit 370.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 370"

MS WILSON: And as explained on the first page of the statement, that submission was a distillation of comments from the Council, so the information that you're providing is information that you've received from Council; is that the case?-- Primarily, and other discussions that I was involved in with various people.

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Okay. Now, the LGAQ provided a supplementary submission on the 7th of April 2011. Can you have a look at this document, please?-- Yes, that's the supplementary submission.

And who authored that document?-- A colleague of mine and I, but I signed it.

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Commissioner, I tender that submission and I'll refer to that submission as Submission 2.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 371.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 371"

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MS WILSON: And you provided a second statement dated the 6th of May to the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry. Can you have a look at this document, please?-- Yes, that is it.

And there's attachments to that document?-- That is correct.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that document - that statement with its attachments.

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COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 372.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 372"

MS WILSON: And I'll be referring to that statement as the second statement. Now, can we look at the roles performed by the LDC and the LDMG? Now, you're familiar with those terms?-- Yes.

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The Local Disaster Coordinator and the Local Disaster Management Group?-- Yes.

If we can go to your first statement and on page 2 of your first statement, the mutuality of roles is referred to, and it's stated, "The mutuality of roles refers to the fact that each element of the disaster management - LDMG, DDMG, SDMG - is an aggravation of effort, not a handover of control from one level to another." Now, you're the - well, your view and the view of the LGAQ is, "The mutuality of roles between the DDC and the DDMG and the LDC and the LDMG needs to be imbedded into the Disaster Management System."?-- I think it needs to be better understood.

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Well, can you explain the practical effect of the mutuality of roles that you refer to?-- If an event occurs at a local level and the Local Disaster Management Group is activated, it is accepting responsibility and taking a response to the situation that occurs. In the event that is beyond the resources or the capacity of the Local Disaster Management Group to deal with that event, it is escalated and involves the District Disaster Management Group. Subsequently, if the issue extends beyond the district, then the State Disaster Management Group involves. The point that is made in the submission is that each of those elements of the Disaster Management System plays a role; it is mutually inclusive and not exclusive in the event that it escalates from local, to district to state. That's an important part of the management system. It is emphasised in the submission to recognise that as events escalate, it is important to be utilising all of the resources and all of the inputs from the different - or the three phases of the system.

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And how do you envisage what you're referring to could be implemented in the Disaster Management Act. What are you seeking for the Disaster Management Act to be amended to state?-- It is not specifically an amendment to the Disaster Management Act that is proposed, but perhaps an understanding on the part of the people who are involved in the system, at local level, district level and state level, that the roles are mutually inclusive, and that, in the operation of their various responsibilities, that the engagement between local and district and district and state recognises the importance of that collective input and collective responsibility. It is not anything other than an emphasis of that important relationship and the partnership and collaborative approach that is necessary on the part of the players in the system to make it work effectively.

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So, ultimately this will be a matter of training and a greater education to all three levels in the disaster management - in the disaster management structure?-- It is certainly a matter of training and understanding, but importantly it is a matter of relationships between the individuals to understand their particular roles and their collective roles. That will come through communication, through training and the establishment of effective communications. I'm not suggesting that that is not universally the case, but, importantly, it needs to be recognised and practised. Our ability in whatever we do to effect - to be effective in that role is only as good as our currency of our knowledge and our practice. That's the point

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being made here.

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So, is it the case that there were examples of some individuals in the district or the state level who didn't understand or appreciate the role that the LDMG did?-- That was brought to our attention in some cases, and it was a matter of new people in new roles at short notice, circumstances where people did not know well enough at a personal level the individuals that they would necessarily be dealing with, at a local level or a district level. It was simply highlighting the importance of that communication, that relationship to make the system work effectively.

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The view of the LGAQ is that, "Protocols need to be developed to streamline LDMG engagement with DDMG, SDCC and SDMG during events." Why do you need such protocols?-- I think it is to ensure, again, that all of the people that are involved in the process understand what's involved. I think it is again important to highlight that we've just come out of an extended period of drought and less activity, if you like, in the disaster management arena and, on that basis, individuals are not as familiar with their roles and responsibilities, not only in legislation, but in terms of guidelines and the arrangements that support those legislative requirements.

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So, can this also be achieved by a greater understanding of disaster management structure which, in effect, can be achieved through training and education?-- Yes, it can.

The LGAQ's view is that participation by the LDMG in SDMG meetings should be by exception. Why is that?-- Experience through January, in particular as the flooding situation was exacerbated, involved at any one time potentially 20, 30, 40 and, ultimately, when the whole state was involved, approaching nearly all of the councils, or all of the LDMGs on line, depending on the circumstances. The concern that a number of them expressed was that they were involved in those conversations - or in those meetings by teleconference, significantly demanding of their time for potentially a very short interaction in relation to their need. You need also to understand that whilst that is occurring, they have their interactions at the District Disaster Management Group level, and the State Disaster Co-Ordination Committee activities as well. It is simply a reflection of the demand on their time to engage in those interactions when they see a priority to deal with the issues locally, and the suggestion is that some way of streamlining those processes should be explored. Having them involved by exception is the suggestion.

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That only if the issue was acute enough for it to be elevated to that point that the LDMG got involved?-- Yes.

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But if your town is being flooded, that would be that point, wouldn't it?-- Those that were involved - when there was flooding, and there were issues, they were involved, but quite often they were involved when the flooding peak had passed and the issues were more managed and the activities at local and district level were dealing with those situations. It was a

matter of specific need that was being highlighted there.

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And in page 5 of that - of your statement, comments from Council on specific issues included the view that there was, "A need to improve cross-LDMG and cross-DDMG interaction within the same catchment to maximise information exchange and upstream/downstream communication." Can you explain what you mean - what that is referring to?-- I think the specific example that gave rise to that statement involves the Banana Shire Council, the Central Highlands Regional Council, different catchments and where they might operate at different - or at different district levels, and yet their proximity to one another and their interaction may well be appropriate, yet the structure of the system has them in different areas. It was only highlighted in that one location, to my recollection, as a question that needed consideration.

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So, what's the possible suggestion to deal with that?-- It may involve some adjustment to district boundaries or - not on a permanent basis, but on an event basis. If the disaster district boundary is problematic in a particular situation, then the responsibilities might vary from the standing arrangements to deal with issues that cross catchments or go outside of district arrangements.

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So is the-----

COMMISSIONER: What's the - sorry, Ms Wilson - what was the actual problem there, just so I understand what you're getting at?-- The reporting line, as I recall, from the local to the district crossed the district line, and the interaction between the local disaster groups and the district disaster groups was not readily available through the alignment of local councils into their district arrangements.

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I still don't really understand what you mean in concrete terms. How did that happen? What was wrong?-- Well, issues - flooding travelling down a catchment from an upper reach to ultimately the mouth will affect the communities along that river system. The issues, as I recall it, in that case, crossed a district boundary. The district responsibility was in Gladstone in the case of Banana, was in Rockhampton in the case of Central Highlands, yet it was the same catchment.

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So it is really one problem going through two districts?-- One problem - yes, handled in two different areas.

Okay.

MS WILSON: So, is the answer that the local government district should remain and other districts should confirm with those boundaries?-- Well, the Local Disaster Management Group boundaries are, in fact, the local government boundaries.

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Yes?-- The district boundaries are the administrative districts in place through QPS and EMQ. The issue's been discussed previously and provisions exist for flexibility in the responsibilities at a district level to deal with

situations that cross districts. That-----

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But within the one local LDMG boundary?-- There's no LD - no district boundary that crosses at the local boundary, it's a question of local governments in one catchment in fact reporting to two different districts; issues that are flooding is occurring in that particular catchment will run the length of that catchment affecting the councils in that catchment, yet it can be an engagement that involves two districts to deal with.

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And the solution being, is it, a temporary co-ordination of boundaries?-- Yes.

Just while we're on that page, the first dot point refers to that, "All relevant groups, including local politicians, should be represented on and participate in LDMGs. This avoids the potential for bypassing the defined chain of command." How was or is the defined chain of command being compromised by not all local politicians being represented on or participating in the LDMG?-- The role of local members of State Parliament and Federal Parliament is one where they understandably want to be involved and play a very important role in supporting the needs of their constituents within an affected area. The suggestion we're making here is that they can make the most effective contribution if they are, in fact, well involved in the processes, particularly at the Local Disaster Management Group level. That brings together all of the relevant agencies of government to deal with the issues that are before that Local Disaster Management Group. The political interface is an important one, because it can enhance their understanding and knowledge of the issues being faced, and they can effectively support that role. The suggestion being that if they are not as well engaged as is suggested, then, perhaps, that opportunity is denied them, or it operates in a way that is not appreciative of how the system works from local to district to state, et cetera.

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Can I take you now to the capability of councils to deal with disaster management. Now, the events of the summer of 2010/2011 demonstrate the enormous responsibility that local councils carry in disaster management. Clearly, some councils, some regional councils, have greater capability than others. How do we ensure that all councils have disaster management capability as the legislation requires?-- The legislation prescribes local disaster management groups, and it is important to highlight the role of the Council is not the role of the LDMG.

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Right?-- Each Council is required to put in place certain plans and to have certain resources available to it to meet its obligations. Quite obviously, as you say, some larger councils will be better able to do that than smaller councils. The important consequence of this is that if an event occurs in either of a well-resourced or less-resourced area, it will - the response will be different in terms of when its triggered to the district level. In other words, if the event is beyond the capacity at the local level, then it will

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trigger involvement at a district level to support it. Conversely, the event at a local level, which is larger and well resourced, may not do that. So, the system is scaled to respond to the circumstances and the capacity of the local disaster management groups. That's the fundamental principle on which the system works.

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But some regional councils are better resourced and have better capability for dealing with disaster when it comes to their region. How do we make sure that that's standardised - that if you're a resident in a Council region that is not as well resourced, that the disaster management approach by that LDMG will be the same as in a well-resourced Council?-- Well, you won't get a standardised, uniform approach between Brisbane and Boulia and Bamaga. You will have a system that is built on the fundamental principles and processes that they all need to meet. We need, I think, at the outset, to ensure that those planning processes, the identification of the resources, the capacities are clear and understood, the training and skills that people need at a local level are in place, and there is a reasonable oversight that that is the case. Our submission does identify that that's a role - a review and oversight role on the Department of Community Safety as the agency responsible for the legislation.

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There's been-----?-- That is the basis to establish the system, but I make my point again, in that if that is the case, then between Brisbane and Boulia, you do have different resourcing capabilities, and you can't change that. If the event at Boulia is beyond its capacity, then that triggers a district involvement with other resources being made available to support what is happening at the local level.

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There has been comment made that the Lockyer Valley Council could not cope and struggled to cope with the enormity of the events that occurred there. Is there anything the LGAQ seeks in assisting councils, like the Lockyer Valley Regional Council, in dealing with these issues?-- There are many local governments across Queensland that would have struggled with the enormity of that event - even many larger councils. It is, I guess, my point again that if councils have in place the adequate plans and systems and processes to deal with the risks that they reasonably can predict and plan for, that is the starting point. If an event happens beyond that level of risk assessment and beyond the immediate capacity of that local government area, then that's when external resource support is triggered, through district levels and state levels. I don't think there is an alternative or better framework that would ensure that beyond any doubt in any location that you could have a system that could deal with the situation of that magnitude immediately. It will always require external help.

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One suggestion is that the LDMG can be assisted by a fly-in team with disaster management experience to assist them in dealing with the issues at hand. What's the LGAQ's view on that?-- The importance of the ready availability of resources - external resources - is the important point here. One of

the understandings, I think, that is most important to this is that before a disaster event, during the disaster event and after it, the local community is there, its local Council is there. The community would not want - and nor would local government - want to see that level of local knowledge, that local leadership, that local understanding, importantly local ownership, lost in a system that might transfer responsibility to somebody else.

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What about in a supporting role?-- The supporting role is agreed, and that is the nature of the district level, of the state level-----

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But what about when the LDMG is just not coping and they need some further assistance from some personnel that is experienced in disaster management. Does the LGAQ not support that assistance required by the LDMG?-- Absolutely not. I agree with you, external support is needed, and, in fact, in our submissions we identify systems and processes that we have helped establish that enable councils to receive outside support from other councils, and that was activated during this event, and a number of councils offered assistance to Lockyer Valley, and that was taken up. We, as an organisation ourselves, deployed a number of people to assist - experienced former Council officers who have capacity to assist the operation of the Council. We did enable and facilitate a number of supports to go to the Council. So, I'm agreeing with you. I was perhaps interpreting your question as to suggest that there was some way in which you transfer to somebody else responsibility for what's needed. I'm not sure that that is the appropriate response, but adding to local resources on the ground is agreed, most definitely.

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And on the same topic we've heard about the Somerset Regional Council getting support from the Gold Coast City Council?-- Yes.

For personnel to go up to the Somerset region. These alliances between councils, should they be formal relationships or should they be more flexible arrangements?-- Within a particular district - disaster district - those arrangements are possible because they are - if I could paraphrase - immediate neighbours or people operating within the system where the knowledge of their resource capacity and availability is readily known, and proximity means it can be provided easily. Establishing alliances outside of district and afar does pose problems in that it assumes that one area is able to help another when, in fact, they might both be affected in a different way. You need a system of availability of resources from other local government areas to assist wherever it is required, whenever it is required. It doesn't necessarily need a standing alliance relationship, but certainly a system that can bring help from where it is available to where it is needed and our Council to Council is designed for that and it did happen in the recent events.

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Perhaps this might be an opportune time for you to explain the C2C program?-- The C2C is the Council to Council program. We

established this in February/March of 2010, arising out of the floods in South-West Queensland, and it is, for want of a shorthand description, a match-making arrangement between councils who are in need - that those who are able to provide assistance to councils that have asked for it. It is designed to facilitate and expedite the provision of resources to those councils that need it. It was established, as I said, in 2010, with a - as a result of the extensive flooding in South-West Queensland, and it was applied on this occasion, and the submissions highlight how it operates and some examples of how it worked.

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And where mutual aid is being provided between councils, it's the LGAQ's view that this should be done within the C2C program and its linkage to the disaster management program and the operation of the SDCC?-- Absolutely. We don't believe there should be separate systems running in tandem. They should coordinate with the system provided for under the Disaster Management Act. That ensures that we are co-ordinating resource deployment in the most effective way possible. What we attempt to do through C2C is streamline that process, and it is particularly important outside of districts where a District Disaster Coordinator seeking resources to help a particular Local Disaster Management Group might not immediately know of available resources. If we, through our networks, can help in the identification of resources and their availability, that means that when the requests are made, they can be readily met. That's the purpose of the system.

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And is it the LGAQ's view that in some councils, there's some confusion about how the C2C program operates, and therefore there should be greater education and clarification being made about the C2C program?-- I agree with that. It was only established in 2010 for the floods, as I said, in South-West Queensland. It came upon us again to a far greater extent in the events - the most recent events, and the awareness of the C2C program needs to be increased, and we certainly plan to do that, and we've got our own Council events, our annual conference - disaster management conference coming up in July where we're going to do more of the development of that system, the awareness of the system, and work closely with EMQ to ensure that it works effectively in future.

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I suppose you can see the frustration, though, if you're a Regional Council and your neighbouring Regional Council needs some assets or resources that you've got. You can't just give it to them, it has got to be processed through the Disaster Management System, which could take some time?-- Well, the C2C program is primarily intended for when the events require assistance outside of the immediate disaster district. So, if it's immediate neighbour to neighbour, they will be in ready contact and the Disaster Management System enables that to work. Our program focuses more on larger scale events where ready support from a neighbour is not - more than that is required.

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Well, if even if we extend it to that where there is one regional council has a need and one regional council has a desire to fulfil that need, that cannot just operate quickly and efficiently but has to go through the system?-- Well, the system expects that to occur more so to ensure that the resources are applied effectively. It is an important to realise that sending resources from one place to another other than short a distance usually requires assistance that's normally provided through the State Disaster Coordination Centre. The logistics of moving significant resources from one location to another some distance away does require coordination and if there is significant activity occurring at any one time, then effectively trying to coordinate is most important.

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COMMISSIONER: Ms Wilson, I'll take the lunch break. 2.30?

MS WILSON: Yes.

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THE COMMISSION ADJOURNED AT 1.01 P.M.

THE COMMISSION RESUMED AT 2.28 P.M.

GREGORY THOMAS HOFFMAN, CONTINUING:

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MS WILSON: If we can now refer to disaster management plans and the auditing and management of disaster management plans. Should LGAQ have an oversight or auditing role in disaster management plans?-- I don't believe we should have an audit or overseeing role. We should have a support role in the development of those plans. The plans are a requirement under legislation and if there is to be any audit or oversight, perhaps that is a function of government, appropriately, to ensure that plans are in line with the legislative requirement, but very happy to support their development.

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Then is it the case that DDMG or EMQ should have a greater oversight or auditing role in disaster management plans?-- We believe so.

If I can go to page 5 of your first statement, it is stated that there should be a more active review of LDMG and DDMG plans and preparedness by the Department of Community Service is encouraged. The view that is then expressed is that it is important that there be established standards for these documents. "The existing guidelines provides broad advice but not the level of detail necessary to satisfy the intention of the legislation." Is that still the case?-- It is. The legislation and the guidelines recognise that the state of Queensland is a very diverse place and the circumstances faced

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in any particular local government area will vary greatly. However, we - we have discovered through this summer the - perhaps the first experience of multiple events, recurring events on a scale that hasn't been experienced before and it would suggest then that the planning process might need to be a little more focused on ensuring that our planning processes go to that level of detail or that level of - or that scope. I think we're experiencing now and what we will continue to experience are events of a nature and of an extent that we haven't in the past and that suggests that the planning processes need to respond to that; hence the suggestion that the planning framework needs to be developed further to ensure that we have prepared ourselves for that possibility.

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What agencies do you see to be a part of that framework?-- Well, the lead agency in my view is the Department of Community Safety. However, the agencies that are actively involved in the process need to be involved to ensure that all of the relevant perspectives are considered in the development of frameworks and guidelines to ensure the plans are as comprehensive as they need be. And they are agencies predominantly within the jurisdiction of the Minister for Community Safety and the Minister for Police.

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In your first submission it is stated that there has been a reduction in funding support for training through EMA, which I think you mean is EMQ?-- No, I was meaning EMA. That's Emergency Management of Australia, which was the-----

So you were putting that to EMA?-- Well, EMA is an agency under the Department of Attorney-General at the federal level which has traditionally, through its centre at Mount Macedon, provided quite extensive training programs. They are a little more difficult to access, they are a little more costly than they have been in the past. But in addition to that there have been and are programs run through EMQ. What I think we're acknowledging here is that at a time when we need to perhaps - well, definitely need to increase our training, some of the - some of the constraints exist there with reductions or more difficulty in accessing programs.

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You say we definitely need to see an increase in training. Where should that training come from?-- I think the primary responsibility is within the state of Queensland. The programs offered federally add further skills and opportunities, but the primary responsibility is a responsibility within Queensland.

Now, LGAQ can provide some form of training?-- Yes, it can.

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And is LGAQ going to provide training?-- We are currently discussing with EMQ and QPS opportunities for us to take a greater role in training. We are a registered training organisation and do have the capacity to increase our current coverage to include disaster management related courses. But in addition to that, we would only do that in collaboration with those agencies because there needs to be an alignment of what our individual efforts are to ensure the most productive

use of resources.

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Have discussions between the LGAQ and those agencies taken place to put this into action?-- Yes. On Tuesday there was a meeting of our Disaster Management Alliance Board where we agreed that we would commence a training needs analysis as the first - first part of identifying what the training needs are and then we can better identify where to go and how to go about it, but particularly in a collaborative way with agencies at both EMQ and QPS levels.

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Well, it's taken five months to get to that point. Do you think this will move quicker?-- I believe it will. We will on the 22nd or 23rd of July conduct our three-day disaster management conference, an event that we have established in conjunction with Emergency Management Queensland over the past two years. This will be the third year. It brings together all of the agencies at state level and at federal level who are actively involved in disaster management. We will be discussing a whole range of matters at that conference and one of which will be how we can progress the training issue and, importantly, the collaboration issues across all of the agencies.

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If I can take you to the issue of sub-LDMGs, otherwise we have heard them called of local emergency coordination centres, we've heard them called community groups. There are some regions where these groups are necessary. Does the LGAQ accept that?-- Yes, and we most definitely do.

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Should it then be the case that these groups should be formalised in the disaster management structure or it should be left on an ad hoc basis?-- We haven't explored that specifically but recognising that many of the communities, particularly post-amalgamation of councils, cover vast areas and cross-catchments, then having a system that ensures capacity is not only established at a whole of council level but can operate at a decentralised level is important. I'm certainly open to that discussion as to how best we could structure the arrangement to ensure that community and village level coverage is enhanced.

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If we can go to evacuation centres, we've heard that some councils have a memorandum of understanding with the Red Cross to manage/operate evacuation centres?-- Yes.

Is there any reason why a council would not have a memorandum of understanding with an agency like the Red Cross?-- It is probably more to do with the nature of the events that are likely to be experienced. Many of the flooding events in western Queensland, slow flowing, low rising rivers don't create necessarily the need for evacuation centres of the type that you need in the event of a cyclone or a significant storm event that are more likely to be experienced on the coast. As I understand at the moment, there are 10 councils who have protocols with the Red Cross for operation of evacuation centres. Ten are currently in discussion with them for evacuation centres. There is merit in establishing those

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arrangements. I see that as a demonstration of a good collaboration between government and non-government organisations that can contribute to ensuring our most effective response.

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And how many councils that do not have a memorandum of understanding or in discussions to have a memorandum of understanding? There's 20 councils, doing the arithmetic, of those two subsets?-- Yes.

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How many remaining?-- Well, there are 73 councils in total. But, as I said before, the circumstances in some areas are not necessarily going to place immediate pressure on evacuation centres to be conducted or operated independently. But I do recognise the opportunity should be taken to discuss more fully with Red Cross and it might be something that we could expand across the state.

Well, in any event, there needs to be some form of clarification of roles and responsibilities-----?-- Yes.

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-----in relation to management and service provision at the evacuation centres?-- Most definitely.

So if councils are not going to get into a memorandum of understanding with an agency like Red Cross, then they should be formalising these arrangements?-- Themselves?

Yes?-- I agree.

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In terms of public education - we've talked about education being given to regional councils and councils. In terms of public education about what to do in a disaster, whose role is that? Is that something that should come from the local governments or is that something that should come from the state?-- I think it's a joint effort. There are issues which should be promoted statewide and we did have through the experiences of the floods and cyclones this year state-based or statewide messaging that advised people, and that's most important. That needs to be supplemented at the local level with information that is particularly targeted at the issues faced in local communities. The approach - the principle that sits behind all the current approach to disaster management is that of local resilience. That involves not only local capacity at a government and non-government organisational level but it also involves ensuring the community is as well informed as it possibly can be. So I see both local government, the Local Disaster Management Groups, having a responsibility and the state combining to ensure that we maximise that public awareness.

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There's reference in the material that you've provided that a review should be undertaken looking at the use of an emergency alert system used on radio. For example, suggestions have been made of the adoption of a flood warning signal. That is, when you hear that flood warning signal from the community, you then turn on the radio to a designated radio channel, I imagine, to determine what the issues are. Is that something

that the LGAQ is encouraging?-- We certainly do recognise the need. One of the biggest - one of the biggest issues faced is that people who have lived in a community for some time and have experienced disaster events, whether it's flooding or storm or whatever, have a knowledge of systems and processes and responses. New arrivals or visitors obviously don't. So we need to ensure that we have not only a common system of information and reinforcement of knowledge but the ability at the time - well, certainly pre-event, if possible, and certainly at the time of an event to ensure that all members of the community, whether permanents or visitors, are informed. And that means we need to use comprehensive information systems, communication systems to ensure that the message gets out.

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Does the LGAQ have a position on warnings about dam releases and who should be notified, whether it should be the residents directly or whether it should be through the councils?-- Our belief is that the agency responsible for the management and operation of the dam has the primary responsibility to ensure that releases that they are about to undertake are conveyed widely. Now, at the moment the system might suggest that government agencies directly involved in disaster management should provide that information. I think it needs to be supplemented with the dam management - or the dam manager having a responsibility to ensure that the information is made available as quickly as possible.

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And what tools are you thinking about when you say that?-- Well, I would think they would use media of all sorts to ensure that that information is made available to the public.

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Is that supplementing the information also being provided to the council?-- Yes. Obviously, the government agencies, whether it's state or local, need to respond but timeliness is of the essence in this - this particular instance. Having the information available as soon as it is possible is important, then the response from both government agencies and individuals themselves is enhanced by the ready availability of that information.

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But that information would be passed on to the council. Would it then not be the council's responsibility to use media releases?-- My point is that the timely release might well ensure that problems that would otherwise arise by a delay in the release of that information, and it might be a matter of half an hour, an hour or two hours. I'm simply saying that as soon as action is to be taken to release the water from dams, then the decision makers in relation to that should be charged with ensuring that information is made readily available to all of the people that were likely to be affected and in the case of government agencies, local and state, those that need to respond.

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Finally, concerns have been raised about the 132 500 number. What are the concerns of the LGAQ in relation to the - that is the SES's number, the use of that number and how that - how information is then actioned?-- The concerns brought to our

attention were in relation to the overload of that system and information that was conveyed to that number not finding its way to appropriate local government - Local Disaster Management Groups for some hours and that a consequence of the overload of the system and the need for, as I understand it, call centres significantly removed from - from the areas to deal with the problems. So it was a matter of overload more than any criticism of the existence of this system and the value that it does bring.

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Can you give me any suggestions how that process can be readily streamlined so the LDMGs are getting their information quicker?-- Well, it is a fact that the management of call centres, if you rely solely on a single centre that ultimately is overloaded, then you will have the problem. You do need backup. And the nature of call centres is such that they can be quite significantly removed from an area, the immediate area. They can be interstate. They can be even international.

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So is your answer more call centres?-- More call centres or the capacity for the 132 500 number to ramp up its capacity in whatever way necessary.

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Thank you. I have no further questions.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Ambrose, do you have any questions?

MR AMBROSE: No questions.

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COMMISSIONER: Mr Dunning?

MR DUNNING: No questions, thank you.

COMMISSIONER: Mr MacSporran?

MR MacSPORRAN: No questions.

MS O'GORMAN: No questions.

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COMMISSIONER: No more questions. So thank you very much, Mr Hoffman, you're excused.

WITNESS EXCUSED

MS WILSON: I call Deputy Commissioner Stewart.

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IAN DUNCAN HUNTER STEWART, SWORN AND EXAMINED:

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MS WILSON: Is your full name Ian Duncan Hunter Stewart?-- It is.

You're a Deputy Commissioner of Police?-- That's correct.

And on the 24th of December 2010 you were appointed the State Disaster Coordinator?-- That's correct.

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And you performed this role throughout the flood events of 2010/2011 in Queensland?-- I did, with a break in between the flood events and the second-----

Cyclone Yasi?-- The second range of cyclones.

We're interested in the flood events?-- Thank you.

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Now, you've made a statement for the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry?-- Yes.

Can you have a look at this statement, please. Is that your statement?-- It is.

Madam Commissioner, I tender that statement.

COMMISSIONER: Exhibit 373.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 373"

MS WILSON: Now, have you been provided a copy of that statement? Yes, you have. Can I take you to page 12 of that statement. Now, the second paragraph on this page talks of an LDMG that had - with its confidence in a levee bank system surrounding the town?-- Yes.

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And you state that there was - significant discussion was required to assist the LDMG in identifying the actual flood risk to their town that potentially could occur due to the record levels of flood?-- That's correct.

Now, this town that you're referring to is Goondiwindi?-- That's correct.

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You mentioned that the LDMG had its own hydrologist and was relying on the information provided to them by that hydrologist?-- That's what I was told.

However, the hydrology information provided to you in the SDMG indicated record level of flooding in the river system upstream from the town?-- To my recollection, the closest water gauge or flood level gauge was at Kildonan Station and

it was indicating record level flooding.

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Did you have and were you provided levels of flooding numbers or was it just in a global terms that there's going to be record levels of flooding?-- No, my recollection was we were provided actual numbers with potential levels that it might go to.

These numbers were greater than what the Goondiwindi - the Goondiwindi Regional Council's information - information that was being provided to the Goondiwindi Regional Council?-- No, not necessarily. My understanding is that they would have been provided that at the same time. My recollection is that they were online at the SDMG, the same SDMG meeting where this was discussed, and when requested for information about evacuation plans they were satisfied that the levee bank system would be sufficient, not to require evacuation. I had great concerns about that.

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The discussions that you had involved you getting on the phone and with the DDC and the chair of the LDC?-- The LDMG.

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The LDMG?-- Yes.

And wanting an evacuation plan with trigger points from them?-- What I attempted to do was to reason with the member - senior members of the LDMG and I think there was not just the chair, who was the mayor, Graeme Scheu, to my recollection I think his chief executive officer was - was online as well and potentially others at that end as well as the DDC as you mentioned, and Greg Hallam from LGAQ was in the room with us, and I felt it appropriate to talk them through the risk assessment that they had considered regarding the potential for the failure of the levee system.

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They had a hydrology report that they were relying upon?-- They had been - sorry. My recollection is that they had a private hydrologist had told them that the - to the south of Goondiwindi is a very large flood plain. That any level of flooding would simply spread out onto that flood plain. The challenge that I had is that early in these events, these flood events in Queensland, I'd had a similar situation at Theodore where basically in the evening - in the evening before the flooding in Theodore, I had been given hydrology advice that a certain flood level would be reached, it wouldn't get any bigger because of the wine glass effect and we didn't have to worry about Theodore. And if - have you heard of the wine glass effect yet?

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Well, I have but perhaps you can explain?-- Okay, I'll explain it very simply. The wine glass effect that hydrologists use all the time is simply that most rivers are in a V-shaped river course. It only takes a small amount of water in reality to move the level up in the initial parts of a flood. But as you move to the later stages of a flood, it takes a huge volume to go up in terms of the height and they call that the wine glass effect. And that was the effect that we were told in Theodore would mean that there wouldn't be any -

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basically wouldn't be any major flooding. That was at about 6 o'clock at night if I remember rightly. At 3 o'clock the next morning they were cutting down the power poles in the middle of the street because that was the only dry place left to land the helicopters in Theodore to try and start the evacuation. So I was quite concerned about the - A, the potential for figures even higher than what we were told. I was also, through my experience over this time, made very much aware that every flood is a different animal. A flood in St George 10 years ago is going to have a different effect to a flood in St George today, for a whole range of reasons. And it can be as simple as the amount of litter on the ground holding the - holding the water up. It can be as simple as the rain falling in a slightly different pattern so it builds up and then creates a wave effect. All of these issues were issues that I took into account when having the conversation with the Goondiwindi LDMG.

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What were you seeking from the Goondiwindi LDMG?-- All I was seeking - I'm sorry.

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No, what were you seeking?-- What I was seeking was some recognition that they should have a contingency in place to manage what was a potentially a breach of the levee system caused by record flooding and that that would protect the life of the people in that community. What I was hoping was that they would simply be able to consider a phased evacuation plan, which is a normal process with trigger points, and the type of example that I would give is that at a certain level you may - of river height on the outside of a levee bank, you may consider withdrawing people from the lower section of town marked by X number of streets. The second phase would be the next most risk - people at risk and the third phase would be when you finally have large inundation. That's the sort of plan that I was hoping that they would provide to me.

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When you are looking at trigger points are you looking at predicted levels or actual levels?-- Well, they can be both. In fact, they're actual - normally, they would be actual levels. The triggers - I'm sorry, I'll start again. The trigger points are actual levels. Meaning, if you're predicting that the thing is going to go to, say, I don't know, a metre above a particular mark on the levee bank, in other words the water is coming in, then you want to be able to say that before that occurs, as the water gets to a certain point you are going to get the lowest people out. So it gives you time to evacuate the next group and then time to evacuate the next group. That's - that's all I was looking for, contingency plan.

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If you can turn the page, you provide a second example and that second example is in relation to St George. That is a town?-- Yes, there was another issue in relation to St George.

What was the other issue in relation to St George?-- Well, sorry, the other issue was in terms of me going to St George to discuss the concept of when the trigger points would be reached for them to start evacuation. As you probably know

with St George, there is - they had built - they had a system of levee banks in place. They had already reinforced those levee banks. There was flooding in the lower areas of town. They had evacuated some of those areas. And then it became a timing issue in terms of when was it appropriate to try and get the rest of the people out or part of those people out to higher ground. And the part of the complexity with St George was - related to the Moonie Highway when it opened, not open, that sort of thing.

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Moving up to your visit to the community, there was a discussion of a 15.5 metre peak of the Balonne River height in St George. Are you aware of that?-- I remember - I do remember that there were a number of heights that we were considering and, again, this comes back to these are predictive.

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But in St George it wasn't even predictive. Wasn't it scenarios that BOM was looking at?-- I'm sorry, would you repeat that.

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Was it BOM was looking at various scenarios?-- That's where I would have got my advice from, yes.

That wasn't a forecast that BOM provided?-- Not necessarily. I mean, with - there was still rain in that area. The Barrackdale Choke was having record amounts of water as I understood it, and the Barrackdale Choke is above St George as you're probably aware. What we were looking at were the contingencies if the waters continued to rise because the lower parts of St George were already in flood.

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Based on these examples, you consider there is scope for consideration of legislative powers to be given to the SDC?-- It is a really important issue and since I made my statement some time ago I have given this significant thought. One of the challenges is that I truly believe in the three-tier approach to disaster management in the state. Meaning, that the actual work occurs at a local government level; they're supported by the district level; and, ultimately, coordination occurs and resources are provided at that state level when things really escalate. One of the challenges when that - and I think you raised it just before, that there are variabilities in the abilities and capacities of different councils and LDMGs and potentially, I mean, it could even be - you could even take that to the DCC level. There are examples where there is variability in knowledge, expertise, certainly a commitment - sorry. The ability to commit to a risk assessment which is reasonable, those sorts of things. So decision-making tools that are used out there, there is a lot of variability in that. One of the things that I considered during my time as the SDC was whether or not there would be a benefit in having as a final line of defence to a disaster or catastrophe some power or direction by the SDC. It probably wouldn't be a power that you would exercise normally but it might be a power that only occurs at a particular point in an event.

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For instance, if - for instance, in the Goondiwindi example, if they'd simply said, "No, we're not even going to worry about this. We're satisfied on our personal experience that we don't need an evacuation plan.", where do we go to from there? 1

Well, the DDC has powers?-- Yes, the DDC has powers, but the SDC has no power over the DDC, other than by my parallel role as the Deputy Commissioner of Police or a senior officer of police, but that mightn't always be the case, because the current legislation always the SDMG - the Chair of the SDMG, in consultation with the Commissioner of Police, to actually nominate an SDC who is not a police officer. So, you may actually have a situation where you get someone from outside of policing who is trying to direct the DDC to do work or to direct the DDC to direct the LDMG. 10

But for your scenario to exist, it would have to be the case that the DDC would not think it is appropriate either?-- And that's possible. 20

So, it will be the LDC and the DDC not thinking that these steps were appropriate or necessary?-- No, no, not necessarily. It could be that the DDC may be potentially unaware of the risk, particularly if it was a particular type of disaster, one that is not normally within the scope of what we do for our-----

But that's just an information sharing, isn't it, that the DDC is made aware of the risk?-- Ah, yes, and then the DDC has got to - but, I mean, at the end of the day, the DDC is then accountable for the decision. They're going to want very good information in certain circumstances. 30

And this risk or this situation that you discuss could be alleviated with better planning and preparedness that these evacuation plans with triggers are already within the disaster management plan of these regions?-- The answer is yes, absolutely. 40

So, if that - if those plans, which you're seeking, were there-----?-- Yes.

-----then you don't need any further legislative powers?-- Not just the plans, but the decision-making ability to do that. So, there needs to be some better understanding of risk assessment. There needs to be - sorry, in my opinion, there needs to be a better understanding of risk assessment, and one of the other challenges in all of this is, I think, at the local level - so, I'm talking about at the LDMG level. These are people who are voted into office. Making a decision about mandatory evacuation is a big call, and I understand that - without doubt I understand that - so, it's about the will to make the decision, just as much as it is about having the plans in place to do it. 50

But if you have evacuation plans with triggers, it will give the steps and the process to make that decision easier?-- In

theory, yes.

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Now, what really then may be required is greater auditing of these disaster management plans to ensure that these plans do exist and that they're reasonable in the circumstances?-- Ah-----

It is pointless just having the trigger points for the sake of having trigger points?-- I think understanding and experience is the key to all of this, and that means better training, better systems in place to make sure, as you said, that the plan is reasonable - that it has realistic trigger points. The challenge with that is a whole range of things need to come into play, and that's the current system where the DDCs audit those plans - or are required to make sure that those plans are in place - I think is a pertinent system, as long as it is done.

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But there's processes in place that it should be done at this point in time?-- Absolutely.

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So how can that - you say as long as it can be done. Well, what more needs to exist to ensure that it is done?-- I think the technology helps us here. I think, ultimately, every LDMG probably needs to have their plans quite readily available to their whole community and to the state online, and those plans are regularly reviewed and there are review dates for those plans published; that DDCs - and now that he have XOs back - and that was a feature of the change in legislation - I think it is a capacity situation to make sure that that work is attended to.

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Is there a role for agencies like EMQ to have in auditing these plans to ensure they meet the requirements - the legislative requirements and are realistic?-- Look, giving people responsibility for things like that can be helpful, and I agree with that, but, at the end of the day, having the local knowledge to know that a plan is actually practical is one of the vital steps in all of this. The planning process itself is also critical to the development of expertise, the development of knowledge, the development of confidence, and by that I mean confidence of the community in their local management - local government level - and also the relationship building. That planning process is a vital part of all those things. So, having an audit process on top of that, whilst it doesn't hurt, I believe that the role of the DDC at the moment, who has to ensure that those plans are in place, is a critical one, because they're at that coalface, they have that trust relationship, I hope, with the local LDMG.

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You've already discussed the variability in decision-making and the different capabilities in LDMGs. You've touched upon that?-- Mmm.

How do we overcome these differences in the variability in decision-making and different capabilities between different LDMGs?-- Into the longer term, this is about Team Queensland

and this is about resilience. What it is going to mean is a commitment to training and, by that, I mean, you know, perhaps it's time that we bit that bullet and looked at the college of - the Queensland College of Natural Disasters, which would look at cross-training the agencies, the stakeholders involved, it would look at levels of training, and there would need to be some regulation in legislation about this, so that if you happen to be a person who is working in local government and one of your responsibilities is, for instance, the strategic planning for disasters within that local Council, then you are going to need a qualification to do that, and various - at various levels, there would be other certification of those qualifications. If you're a brand new Mayor, you should immediately, within 12 months of becoming the Mayor, because of your role - important role of leadership in that community and leadership of that LDMG - you should have to have certain qualifications. Now, we know how important people's time is and we know that there is a cost to training, but I look at this way: if we make the system more resilient through this model, if we require people to have a certain level of training - and I'm not just focusing on LDMGs - please don't think that - I'm talking about the whole system here - so, this is DDCs - this the whole works and jerks - that, ultimately, the cost to Queensland is going to be reduced, because the impact of a disaster should be, hopefully, reduced by the fact that we're better prepared, that people know what they're doing and we don't have the tremendous devastation and outcomes that we have now.

So, you would envisage training at the LDC level, the DDC level, the SDC level?-- Absolutely.

And all of the agencies that have to interact at those levels?-- Yes.

And this, you would envisage, would come from an external training source?-- When I first did my very, very first bit of training in disaster management, it was run by - I was a police officer, of course. I remember going to the course up in Maryborough because I was working on the north coast and it was run by Emergency Management Queensland - in other words, EMQ - what is now EMQ. In that room, there were a range of officers from my department, there were people from the fire department, the ambulance, we had SES personnel there, and I think we had a couple of local government members in the room as well. It's that type of training that I'm talking about.

Assistant Commissioner Gollschewski gave evidence in Toowoomba, and in his evidence he noted that the Lockyer Valley was, of course, an enormous event and Council's core business has nothing to do with responding to such situations, and that's not the role of Councils, and it is unfair that they should be held responsible for the response that happened in the first five to seven days in Grantham. What's your view on such comments like that?-- Well, none of us really ever want to have to be confronted by such an event, but the Queensland Police Service is well placed, as is EMQ, to manage these events. The legislation now makes it the responsibility

for co-ordination within the Queensland Police Service, but at the end of the day the - the recovery and the response - everything that occurs from the point of time when the disaster hits, it really is about - it's about local leadership, because, you know, you mightn't get the police there for some time, as occurred in Grantham. Local leadership, local relationships, education, preparedness, they're absolutely key to working to resolve whatever the issue is that is confronting them. Now, I respect Steve's - Assistant Commissioner Gollschewski's point of view on this, but I truly believe that the three-tiered approach is the right one for us.

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We talked about different regional councils having different capabilities and different resources?-- Yes.

There are some regional councils that have significantly less resources than other regional councils, and in those situations, some regional councils just may not have the resources to cope with the disaster management that's required in their region. Inspector Schafferius suggested a fly-in proposal of disaster management, people with disaster management specialty/expertise being able to come in and assist the LDMG. What's your view on that?-- I have heard of this concept, and, look, I think any concept like this is worth considering, but it is a double-edged sword. One of the challenges that I see is that if you - if you're a small Council in particular, one that doesn't have a lot of resources, and you know that if anything really bad happens, there's this team that is going to drop out of the sky and magically fix up your problems - and, please, I don't mean to be trite - I'm not being - but if you have a team of people who are experts in addressing these sorts of issues, then it is possible that that Council might just sit back and say, "Well, we'll do the basics. We'll knock a plan together, we'll tick the boxes on the plan, but we know that if anything goes bad, we're going to be looked after." That's down the path of learned helplessness and, to me, that's absolutely not the way to go.

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So, what is the answer in any future event where a Council is struggling-----?-- Yep.

-----to deal with a disaster management in their area?-- Yes.

What do you do? Do you sit back and say, "Let the LDMG cope as best as they can."?-- No, not at all, and I don't think we've ever done that in this state and I think there's some wonderful examples of what's happening right today in that regard.

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So, what assistance can be provided to ann LDMG in those circumstances?-- I'm not sure that you need - well, can I also put this in the context that in the events that struck Queensland, this was so catastrophic and took up so many resources that by the time Grantham happened, you may have already burned out your - you know, even if you had a team of 100 experts, you may have already been using them all over the

state. So, perhaps there's some hybrid models, and that is that you do identify people that have expertise, and part of the answer to this is if we're only talking Queensland, it's too small, we've got to talk - you really need to think about national capability so that you can pick up people and just drop them in to give support, but it might only need to be one person who can support, provide confidence, who has knowledge and understanding of the issues, just to give confidence to the mechanisms that are already in place within that Council, and I'm assuming that we're only talking about post-disaster here, we're not talking about pre-disaster.

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Mmm?-- Yeah. So, maybe there is a-----

In the response period?-- I'm sorry?

In the response period?-- Ah-----

I'm not talking about planning and preparation, I'm talking about in the response period?-- Yeah, and the response period depends - look, Grantham, the response period was elongated. In other places, you're going to have a flood that occurs over, perhaps, 24 hours, 36 hours. Do you even need to bring people in for that 36 hour period-----

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Somerset Regional Council, they needed assistance and they got that assistance from the Gold Coast City Council by providing some personnel to assist?-- Yes, but was that because of the preparation and the expertise, or was that because - or was that because they weren't prepared enough for what - for any sort of event. Do you know what I-----

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I can understand what you're-----?-- What I'm trying to say.

So what you're saying is there might be issues of planning and preparation that mean we don't have to come to this point?-- Well, just as you said before, if you do other things, you might never need to have that to have another solution to something like, for instance, the powers. You said if you had other systems in place, that I might never need the powers as an SDC. You're absolutely right, and I believe that the same thing is possible in this; that if you prepare properly, if you have the right people with the right expertise, you're probably not going to need - you're probably not going to need the level of support that I think you're talking about.

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But it certainly needs to be considered that if there needs to be a process and this does occur, assistance can be provided?-- Absolutely, and there are some councils where - well, the recovery authority is providing a significant amount of support to some local government areas at the moment.

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COMMISSIONER: A better example might have been the Council which had people from Charleville come in because they had flood experience?-----

MS WILSON: That was the Lockyer Valley Regional Council?-- That was Lockyer Valley and it was-----

COMMISSIONER: It was Lockyer-----?-- Yeah, the guy from Murweh who was-----

That seems to have been quite useful?-- It did, and, see - but there's a big difference between one or two people and a team - sorry, maybe I misread what you're saying - but - and that was because of the catastrophic nature of this event. It was just so big that, really, you've got to say who could cope with something as traumatic as what occurred, bearing in mind that - and there are parallels in other places where individuals lose relations, friends, who actually perish in these events, and the system becomes - the whole system goes into trauma, because people just can't act normally or rationally - think rationally because of the trauma that they've personally suffered. So, there's a very good case to have these - this expertise available. But, in the case of Queensland and the trauma that we suffered right across the board, potentially there's a case to say, "Well, maybe a national scheme that could actually bring in people from other places" - there's a parallel in this, and I know the cyclones events aren't part of this - but in terms of during times of great trauma and fear and what-have-you that occurs with what occurred in the Lockyer Valley, for instance, and perhaps what occurred or was about to occur in the north, that it is actually helpful to have people who haven't got other responsibilities to come in - meaning that their family - they're not worried about their family at home. They're actually - they're able to go and do the job, and they're prepared to do the job and put themselves in harm's way, knowing that their family is in a different state or at least different part of the state. So, that's a critical issue into the future.

Just while I've interrupted, Ms Wilson, could I ask you this: the act requires that the head of a Local Disaster Management Group be a councillor, and, of course, councillors come and go with elections. Is that the best result? Would it be worth considering, instead, saying - in, say, having the CEO of the local council?-- Commissioner, I truly believe that - I think we've got it pretty right as it is, and I say that because, from my considered perspective, the people - the majority of people in that area have usually voted - sorry, have voted those people into those positions, councillor or, in fact, as mayor, and a lot of the mayors take pride in being the head of the LDMG. One of the things I think we need to look at very closely into the future is the expertise of Council officers - so, this is like the CEO and other senior members of the Council and the roles that they play in the LDMG process - and I think that they - if we keep the training - and, as I said before, I'd like to see - personally, I would like to see training that is regulated and required for those people so that they can support the elected officials. But I think the elected officials need to understand their role and the liability they have and the responsibility and the leadership that is necessary in times of stress and trauma.

Mmm.

MS WILSON: The inquiry has heard evidence of the importance of community level capability. We've heard evidence of LECCs, what might be regarded as sub-LDMGs, community-based groups; that is, for example, in Dalby, the Dalby Regional - sorry, the Western Downs Regional Council having LECCs - that is, local groups that have been constituted by an SES member, a police officer, community members, being able to provide information back to the LDMG. Have you got any view on the use and capabilities of these groups?-- It's not a construct that I've actually given much thought to. Look, I think anything like that, if the local people have been suggesting that, then perhaps it is very much worthy of consideration. I actually have a great belief in the issue of enhancing the resilience of Queensland, and by that I mean the more catastrophic the event, the more resilient people need to be and the more understanding that they're likely to be left alone for probably three days. It seems to be the 72 hour thing. So, they have to be self-reliant. They also have to be self-responders. They have to know - sorry, I believe a way forward is that every member of the community has to perhaps accept their responsibility to look after themselves, their family and perhaps to look out for their neighbours, particularly where the neighbours are infirm or disabled, because when you have a catastrophic event, no-one is coming. In fact, you mightn't even be able to get to some areas for a long period of time, and people need to know, need to understand that there will be that period where they've got to look after themselves, and that may include - that may include - providing information back, using their - using other frameworks, like a sporting club or a social club as a framework, and a lot of this is - comes out of the work that's being done in New Orleans from Hurricane Katrina, where the areas that did the best and certainly regenerated the quickest were areas where they used existing frameworks to basically take charge of themselves and move down that - both response and recovery rates. They did take responsibility.

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The framework that I'm looking at is adding another level down from the LDMGs; for example, a local emergency co-ordination centre. They've been operating in towns so that they can get communication levels going to the LDMG when communication may be very difficult to obtain relevant information on the ground?-- Yeah.

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Do you come across that?-- It's an interesting - it's an interesting issue. When I talked about training for paid officials, basically, who are involved in this, I also think that the other component of training is that we have to do a lot more in terms of community education, and I think that we have to consider the aspect of supporting natural leaders who come forward in these sorts of occasions. One of the challenges that I see with the concept that you raise is what you said before about - sorry, I think what the Commissioner said in terms of people move on, you know, through Council, that sort of thing. I mean, we have a very, very mobile society today. People, you know - the number of places that people live, you know, there is - I think all of us see that

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there are some communities that are highly mobile, so how do you actually generate and inculcate and maintain that next level down if you've got a mobile environment or a highly mobile community? Perhaps a better way of doing it is educating everyone, making sure that people know where to go to get information and know who to contact and who to pass information to, so everyone looks after themselves and, again, that's where those natural groupings start to occur. I think if you add another formal layer, you could be spending a lot of money, and - but whether you're getting the results you want, I'm not quite sure.

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For example, the Gladstone Regional Council are establishing a terms of reference with these community groups so that the roles and responsibilities of all parties are known?-- I have no problem with that. I think that that's wonderful, but, to me, that's more about community education and making sure that people do understand where the issues are - sorry, they know their issues, they know perhaps what their risks are, and in times of catastrophe, in times of disaster, they - it makes them more confident to be more self-sufficient.

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If we can look at the QPS role and structure within the disaster management framework, and if I can take you to page 14 of your statement, and that is where you refer to the role of senior police managers at the level of Assistant Commissioner and the Chief Superintendent?-- Absolutely.

Now, what you're discussing there is the framework that Assistant Commissioner Gollschewski established. Is that the example that you're providing there?-- What I'm saying in theory is that when the events in Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley occurred, it became really, really obvious to local senior managers that they were not going to be able to cope with business as usual, so core policing functions and dealing with this significant disaster, they had - bearing in mind that the DDC - sorry, a Chief Superintendent and Assistant Commissioner are not actually recognised within the act, as we know - what the AC proposed and was supported by the senior management of the organisation was to create two parallel systems so that the DDC was supported by experienced and senior officers who could completely focus on what was occurring within the disaster zone, so to speak, while business as usual was then managed by other senior officers who were brought in from outside.

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What Assistant Commissioner Gollschewski did was establish a senior management team that was outside the disaster management legislation, and the DDC, Inspector Schafferius, was part of the senior management team?-- He did, but all I think he did was he formalised a flexible system needed to manage the enormity of what they were facing and to give confidence to Mr Schafferius, who was acting as the DDC at the time, that he had the complete support and operational flexibility that is given by having the higher level officers basically focused on everything that he was doing.

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What occurred there was just not tinkering with the Disaster

Management Act, though, in the structures, it was working outside of it to some degree, though, wasn't it?-- I think it was a complementary arrangement that fitted the circumstances they found themselves in. It was innovative and I think it was a very - sorry, not only do I think it was reasonable to actually do that - and I know - I don't think - that's not what you're suggesting - but it worked so well, we actually used that model through further times in Rockhampton, Townsville and Cairns.

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That's my point. If it worked so well, perhaps it then should be put into the Disaster Management Act as the system that should be operated on a day-to-day basis in disaster management?-- And I hope that the Commission may look at that very closely. I'm sure it will.

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If we can go to evacuation centres? What's - have you got a few about advertising the location of evacuation centres in advance?-- I think that - and I mentioned it earlier - I think that all of the plans, all of the location of evacuation centres, all of the locations of key areas where goods can be sourced from or - you know, that sort of - it should all be advertised - that should all be part of the planning at LDMG level and, with the assistance of the DDMG, that should all be available to people on websites. The challenge you have - and I think I know - sorry, the challenge is that you have people turning up at evacuation centres before there is any evacuation, expecting there to be services there, and that's one of the challenges that we have seen repeatedly throughout this-----

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Is that a challenge that just needs to be managed?-- I totally agree with you.

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So, the starting point is that evacuation centres in the community should be known to the public?-- You're right.

And then that challenge that you're talking about needs to be managed?-- It is managed in a different way and I agree with you totally.

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That then raises the question of unofficial evacuation centres. Communities were isolated, they couldn't get to the evacuation centre, they did not know where the evacuation centre was, and they set up their own evacuation centre?-- Yes.

Do you see any distinction between the resourcing of official and unofficial evacuation centres?-- By their very nature - my experience has been a lot of work has gone into identifying appropriate places for official evacuation centres with all the needs that those facilities need to have. In the catastrophic events that we've been faced with over the last few months, the reason why - and you've actually touched on a number of the reasons why some of those unofficial ones occur - and a lot of it was simply because this was so catastrophic, people couldn't get to the - sorry, to the official ones, so people did the next best thing: they started working out of

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church halls - and this is also, I think, a factor of the community trying to help itself - that church groups created many of these unofficial sites because they had the ability and the knowledge and the expertise in doing that, in sourcing goods and giving them to the people who were in need.

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So - sorry, your specific question is do I see any difference in how you resource them. I think by their very nature what will occur as a result of this event is I think there has to be a rethink of what is a category A - sorry, what would be perhaps a category A evacuation centre, which is your big, your normal one that's going to be there and work - 99 per cent of the time it is going to be okay and it will meet all the needs of your community. But I think that there is going to be a subgroup now of category B ones that by arrangement might only be used once in 30 or 40 years that are those ones which became the unofficial ones where it is there is so much occurring in that community that you actually need that extra capacity. But not that you just need the capacity; you need it in specific places where it might be cut off, like this - this area here might be totally cut off from the evacuation centre with the normal one, which sits over here. And I think you have to be careful - sorry. Then we need to be careful about, well, how - how much resources do you give to that or do you let the unofficial - sorry. Do you let the second category ones, do you let them know that, "Look, we'd like" - "If ever this happens again, we'd like you to open up. We'll know you'll open up. These are the sorts of things that you need to do as a second-tier evacuation centre. You need to be in contact with this" - "This is the contact points back into LDMGs", or if necessary to DDCs, depending how severe it is. But you arrange your planning and make sure that they do get resourced properly as we - as we saw occur right across - well, sorry I'll be careful. My understanding is we helped a lot of these unofficial ones over time.

So if you're a category B evacuation centre, you will be resourced the same as if you're in a category A evacuation centre; is that the ultimate answer?-- I would like to think - I would like to think that we could end up with second tier evacuation centres that only ever get opened when certain criteria are met and that is that you get off, that the big ones are full - sorry, the big category A ones are full. It is still safe to be in a category 2. So we're not talking cyclones here. We are talking other things.

But the problem with that is that facing another flood, no flood is the same. So category A you might not be able to get to, category B might be isolated and then we still face the situation of unofficial evacuation centres opening up?-- Yeah. No, no, I don't disagree with you but I think this last - these last events will give us a much better planning base to actually look at this issue.

But isn't it a situation where government agencies have to look at, when unofficial evacuation centres set up in these circumstances, how are they going to be resourced?-- Well, that certainly occurred this time, there's absolutely no doubt about it, because we were being asked for - for materials for resources. That's absolutely right.

But it may not have occurred as efficiently as if you were in an official evacuation centre?-- Oh, look, I - I don't disagree with you but I - but I think that this was almost a

unique - well, I hope a fairly unique set of circumstances that we face and hopefully it won't happen very often. I think one of the challenges will always be it is far more efficient to have your large-scale, very well resourced evacuation centres. What this set of circumstances has proven to us is that there are flaws in that thinking because of the ability to get there, how far away it is, the capacity of them when some of them just got overwhelmed.

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We heard evidence about private resupply being undertaken by community members. Is there any issues about a private resupply occurring of getting helicopters in or trying to get helicopters in with supply?-- If there is no - if there is no-one else able to do it, yes, I think, you know, there may be some leeway in relation to that but the reality is if - if the system is geared to be providing those resources, then you let the system work, because that's how you know what's going where. So if you've got, you know, 30 crates of milk being able to be taken into an area and you've arranged that through the normal system, at least you'll know that these particular places got that milk so that you know where the milk is on hand so that when someone else comes in and says, "Where is the milk in this area?", you can say, "Well, it is at the evacuation centre", or, "It is down at this shop." When you get this ad hoc approach you have no understanding and no - it is very difficult to track where all of this equipment, supplies, whatever, or capacity is. Now, where that's not possible and there are other examples of private resourcing going on during the flood events and I'll give you examples in - Emerald, I saw it myself, there were people hiring helicopters to come off their properties, come into town, do a bit of shopping, pick up resupply issues, you know, drop off a family member, pick up another worker and go back to their property and they were doing that quite independently off the system, but that's because these people have always done that. They're quite resilient, they understand the issues and they don't want to bother the system in itself because they're quite happy to do that, whereas others don't have that ability.

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If we can go to district boundaries?-- Yep.

Now, the LDMG boundaries don't align on occasions with the QPS boundaries?-- Yes.

Then there's emergency service boundaries that also come into play?-- Yes.

It would assist, wouldn't it, if all the boundaries were the same in disaster management?-- Look, this is a conundrum we've always got because those boundaries do change from time to time and, in fact, other than a particular officer going sick, I'd had a particular officer identified to start looking at this issue of disaster boundaries, district boundaries and LDMG boundaries.

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Mmm?-- That was before Christmas. He went sick. He is still off sick and that's really unfortunate. But, in reality, the

new legislation, and this is one of the great benefits in the change in legislation just last year, it may - it gave us a flexibility in that area and - do I need to explain it?

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Yes?-- You're happy for me to talk it through?

Yes?-- Okay. What the review found was that on occasions there might be benefits in being able to structure a boundary; in other words, rewrite the boundary around the actual event rather than just simply do it on the arbitrary LDMG boundary or do it on a district - Queensland Police Service district boundary. And I'm sure that - I'm sure you're aware of this, that we actually considered trialling that during the event but, in the end, so many of our districts were up and running there was no point in creating arbitrary - arbitrary boundaries. If I could give you an example where I think it would be very, very helpful and I'm glad it is now in legislation, is when we had Cyclone Larry, that impacted on part of the Innisfail policing district, part of the Cairns policing district and part of the Mareeba policing district. The fundamental role - sorry, the fundamental coordination was done by the DDC at Innisfail but because we had three disaster districts involved, there was no ability to not involve those disaster DDMGs and DDCs and LDMGs. Whereas now, what we can do is we can just throw a big loop around that and say, "We are going to make this the disaster district for this event and we are going to make the DDC at Innisfail", or we may even make a chief superintendent or an assistant commissioner in charge of that event and make them - and so the disaster - the declared disaster area can be arbitrary. Now, we do - sorry, one more example. Sorry, there is one more example of this and it is a standing one and it is Brisbane. The assistant commissioner for metro north under these new arrangements is the DDC for Brisbane, for the whole of Brisbane, and people work - so we have got one LDMG but in reality there are cross-overs, there are anomalies on the edges and it takes into account about I think it is six or seven policing districts but there is only one DDC. And so, we've used the new legislation to do that.

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Can I take you now to resources being directed from the SDCC down rather than requests for assistance coming up from the LDMG?-- Sorry, could I just go back one step?

Yes?-- I don't actually answered your question though.

That could be possible?-- I don't think the boundaries actually are as important anymore because of the legislative change that was made. That's - that was the point I was trying to make.

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Anyway, if we can go back then to the resourcing from SDCC down rather than the LDMG. We've heard an example of, for example, in the Balonne shire of helicopters being sent to that area when there was no need. How is that occurring within the disaster management system?-- Okay. We have some really, really wonderful and very strong - sorry, highly competent and very strong personalities amongst our LDMG

chairs and also DDCs even. These are people who are very focused on their area of responsibility. These are people who take great pride in knowing everything that's happening in their area. And if that's only where the flood was happening or that's where the fire was happening, you would understand the need to consult them on every little thing. What I think occurred in these circumstances and I think we're talking about that Roma and St George-type area, there was a lot of discussion at very senior level about the need to try and even pre-empt requests from LDMGs and to actively pre-position resources that were potentially going to be needed in those areas based on our best assessment of the state - the whole events that were occurring across the state. So whilst those people, in good faith, are saying, "Well, you know, I don't know why this helicopter turned up", the reality is at state level we were trying to support their efforts but also to look at what was over the horizon and be ahead of the next wave of rain or the water coming down the river system. In a perfect world, in a perfect world, of course you would consult those leaders, those local leaders. I think the enthusiasm that was generated in trying to assist and pre-empt some of these requests, I think this is a perfect example of that. I also think that in the future we won't have to worry about this and the reason we won't have to worry about it is because in the Roma DDC's office or in the DDMG meeting wherever it is, there will be a huge, big wall of TVs just like that one over there but even bigger. What that will have is the - on it will have a whole range of things. It will have a menu that you can go and you can say, "Okay, I want to have a look at the decision log for the SDCC", "I want to have a look at the current log for the air asset coordination centre", "I want to have a look at the decision model for the SDMG", and that will all be up there. The other thing that they'll have is a map and that will be the map of Queensland and within that map will be these - all of these assets and they'll be - they'll be pinpoints, and they'll be the helicopters and they'll be the SES teams, they'll be the police, they'll be the swift water rescue people, they'll be the QAS task force, they'll be the habitats, all of things, they'll be on the map and they'll just be able to click. And if they see one coming into their area they'll be able to click on it and that will give them a reference to a decision log and they'll be able to see that. Now, do I see that happening tomorrow or the next day, no, but that technology exists today. We see it all the time on TV when we a look at operations - military operations in the Afghan war. It is that type of level of technology which will ultimately become cheaper and available to us.

So it is presently just on your wish list?-- I'm sorry?

It is presently just on your wish list?-- I have got a lost of things on my wish list, absolutely.

But that type of technology and resourcing of the DDCs to that level is not something that could be seen in the foreseeable future?-- Look, I haven't got a crystal-----

Well, is there any plans for it?-- I haven't got a crystal

ball. I never knew what tweeting was only a couple of years ago. I - you know, social media, who knew about that a couple of years ago. You know, the issue - again, I - please, I'm not trying-----

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Has the QPS got plans to actually implement such resources at that level?-- Not yet but-----

Okay?-- -----we know it's available and it is - it is obvious, as has happened with all other technology, that the pace of change and technological innovation is such that I think we will see that sort of thing sooner rather than later. I mean, automatic vehicle location is available to us. Every schoolies we hire a system where we can track every one of our police officers around the schoolies precinct and that's something we've been doing for a couple of years.

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In relation-----?-- So this technology - this type of solution is not that far away anymore.

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In relation to the helicopter examples that you just discussed and you stated that the SDCC was being pre-emptive?-- Yes.

It is the case though if there is not consultation at a local level, then the SDCC's pre-emptive acts can cause distress in the community. For example, the text message that went out to the Moreton Bay area and an emergency alert went out that was general in nature and caused panic in the community and caused a meltdown in communications. The LDMG was not aware the text was being sent out. Now, perhaps this is a communication issue between the DDC and LDMG but it was the SDCC who arranged for the text to be sent out. There needs to be that continual consultation, doesn't there?-- I actually think we're talking about apples and oranges here, certainly in relation to what we just talked about a minute ago.

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Perhaps if we could just focus on this example then and keep it at apples?-- No, absolutely, I would love to. The particular example you're talking about was - is an unfortunate example of the limitations of technology that we currently are faced by and I think that will change rapidly. I think it is a breakdown in communications, as you quite rightly said, between the key stakeholders. But I think that if you take this and you take it out of the context of what was occurring and what just had occurred, I would rather inconvenience a whole bunch of people and not have a single death than have multiple deaths and be accused of not warning people beforehand, and I think that that - unfortunately, that's the tension we find ourselves in at that senior - you know, at that senior level. The timeliness of these things is absolutely critical, and you know that. I mean - please, I'm not telling you anything you don't know. But that area of emergency alert messaging is something which greatly concerns us. It is something that we have - as an organisation, we have actually engaged already with EMQ to have a joint working group to look at all aspects. So it is not just the one side of it, the technical side of it and what the message is going to say, how do you get it to go along the river bank instead

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of to that polygon issue, and even I don't understand it well enough. But my understanding is in computer speak, they basically take a shape and they put it over an area and they say, "That's" - "Every mobile phone or every phone in that area is going to be contacted when they press the button." Now, that doesn't help you when all you - the only people you want to contact are the people along a small strip of low lying land on either side of a river somewhere. So there's a lot of work to be done. But I think the biggest issue is again coming back to the education of the community, to help them understand what it means when you get one of these things. My greatest fear though, and it is a great fear, is the cry wolf syndrome. We've got to be very, very careful about how we use these things. And there won't always be time for a DDC or an LDMG to ask for one of these to go out. And, in fact, they mightn't even have the information that someone else even at state, so SDCC level, is seeing on a screen or is getting immediately via a - you know, a crisis phone call from BOM, saying, "This is about to happen." Or I'll give you another example and that's a tsunami alert type thing. How do you deal with that?

In terms that you just spoke about of concerns about the SMS, there was I think did you talk about-----?-- EA?

No, with the SMS text going out?-- Yes.

The wording?-- Oh, the number of characters and that.

Yes?-- Yes, there has to be a - we have to work out a better way of dealing with that.

Why do you have to work out a better way?-- Because there is only so many characters that can have. I think it is 150 or something.

And you need more information to go out. Is that what you're wanting?-- Well, I think - I think if we are going to start putting code in there so we can provide more information very, very quickly, and that's a really good way of doing it, then, potentially, do we need to educate the community what does that code mean. So if you say, "This is a code red", you know you have got 10 minutes to act or something like, you know what I'm getting at? So you don't have to put in, "Warning. You have got 10 minutes to act." It just says, "Code red", Bang, this is what you've got to do.

You talk about at page 9 of your statement that there was a number of deaths in Queensland due to persons driving or trying to drive through flooded creeks or where individuals had died as a result of misadventure when swimming in areas affected by flood waters?-- Yes.

You then discuss that these unfortunate deaths are symptomatic of the impact of annual rain events in the respective areas?-- Mmm.

It is a problem, it is a problem about community education.

What do you think that can be done to further the community education in relation to driving through flooded creeks?--  
 It's a real challenge. And I could say to you that you could tell them a thousand times and they're still going to do it. And there are those places where every year it rains and water goes over the causeway and people drive through it, nothing happens. And as did happen on this occasion before Christmas, a family drove across a causeway up at Georgetown or in that vicinity and, ultimately, the wife perished trying to save the kids. And that's the sort of thing I'm talking about, because the water was flowing too hard. There's a whole range of things we can do. Community education is something we must do and must do. We must-----

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And more of it?-- Absolutely. Signs at causeways that we can't fix. Engineering - engineering will help, meaning that we actually build better causeways or better roads that are actually - hopefully won't be flood. Can you do that for every road in Queensland; probably not. That's probably a - you know, a dream in the sky.

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And finally-----?-- But community education is critical.

Your statement refers that since the 11th of February you have contributed to the capacity of QPS to identify opportunities for improvement resulting from your operations throughout December 2010 and into January and February in response to the significant flood and weather events impacting on Queensland. Is that a debrief that you have been part of?-- Absolutely. A couple of things have happened. At the very senior levels in the organisation we decided very, very quickly as we were tailing out of the Yasi events that - and, in fact, there was even conversation about this after the initial events in the - sorry, after the initial flooding events that tailed off towards the end of January that, A, we would need a group of people to bring together the records of the Queensland Police Service on how we responded to this matter and basically create the official record of what occurred within our organisation. That's a normal - that's a normal process. But we also recognised that this isn't - it is not like just a simple event like, you know, an incident occurring down in Queen Street or something like this. This was massive. So we actually decided that we would create a team of people and we would put a very senior officer in charge of that group and they would undertake that role, and that's occurred and that group still exists today.

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Where are you up to in relation to that, to be able to produce a document?-- Well, they have a number of roles and that's been an evolving issues because they have predominantly done a lot of work to help the - to assist in preparing all of the documents that have been required by this Commission, and quite properly so. They have a range of other roles to play and that is in - in also keeping abreast of what's occurring here so that we can be in a position to better assist the Commission if required. So that's happened as well. They have gathered an awful lot of information. They have pulled information in. They have undertaken an internal and external

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survey of our own people but also key stakeholders in relation to our performance as an organisation during that time. They have also orchestrated or been responsible for the process of the debrief that we have done of the senior executive of the organisation, and they have just recently completed a draft report with all 70 recommendations of issues that we are going to have to look at internally of the organisation. So that these things are parallel taskings of course.

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So will that document or the documents even the interim documents, like the recommendations that need to be internally dealt with in the organisation, can that be provided to the Commission?-- Of course.

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Okay. I have no further questions.

COMMISSIONER: Mr Dunning?

MR DUNNING: Thank you, Commissioner. Deputy Commissioner, my name is Dunning. I appear on behalf of the Brisbane City Council. There is only one topic I wanted to discuss with you this afternoon and that's evacuation centres. You characterise them, albeit loosely, into category A and category B. We have heard other evidence that have said some are evacuation centres, some are emergency shelters, some are supporter groups. There seems to be no particular consistency around the nomenclature for these things?-- Not at all.

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But say you and I are on the same page so to speak, if we can call it an evacuation centre or what I think you would call a category A evacuation centre, and that's one where you're planning to house a substantial number of persons over a period of days at least?-- Yes.

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That's a definition you'd agree with?-- Can I clarify this for you?

Please do?-- My classification of A and B, there is no formal arrangement for that. I - I am just using that as an example of what I think has been shown by this event that we may need to explore into the future. Meaning that there is evacuation centres and evacuation centres. There is no classification category that I am aware of other than what you've just mentioned. What I am saying, into the future we may need to rethink that because there will be times where all we need is the standard current arrangements for evacuation centres but there are times of such great stress that I believe in the future we may need to rethink what that role looks like.

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Yes. For the time being, if we can start with those that are what I'd call an evacuation centre properly so-called or category A to use your description. So that is where we're looking to house-----?-- Yes.

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-----a substantial number of people for a period of days, feed them, provide bedding and the like. Deputy Commissioner, the

considerations about where such an evacuation centre is and whether it should be published in advance varies really, doesn't it, depending on the size of the community; would you agree with that?-- Um-----

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Well, perhaps can I give you an illustration-----?-- I think there is some argument in relation to that but I think I made it quite clear my view is I actually have a - I have a preference that all of these sites are provided. That that knowledge is available to the community in some shape or form.

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During the event?-- Well, even prior to the event. I have no problem with it being - with it being on a website. I think there is a big difference between notifying or giving people that advice and knowledge about where these places are and, in fact, what to expect if you happen to have to go to one. But at the same time the management of that evacuation centre as to when does it open, when will it be staffed, what is its - how will its capacity be managed, these are all issues that the greater the education in my, in Ian Stewart's opinion, the better off we will be in the management of those centres ultimately.

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Undoubtedly. Can I suggest to you, though, there is a distinction to be made. Take - if can I give you two extremes. Take, first of all, a small community of a couple hundred people?-- Yes.

You could fairly safely nominate the evacuation centre for that community, couldn't you, because it will be tend to be the place that's least likely to be flooded, least likely to be affected by fire, everyone will know where it is - a reasonable proposition I think you would agree?-- Yes.

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If you take Brisbane at the other extreme, Brisbane has many potential evacuation centres set up against many different contingencies, doesn't it?-- It - that's possible.

Yes. And not only that, some of those contingencies are by their nature the sorts of things that you wouldn't particularly want broadcast in advance?-- I think I know where you're coming from. I mean, the actual siting and the services provided by a particular place which is an evacuation centre may depend on a whole range of - of issues. For instance, if it is not a flood, if it is a catastrophic storm at The Gap, it is no good using The Gap High School as your evacuating system.

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Yes?-- But there's nothing wrong, in my opinion, in saying that The Gap High School is one of the planned evacuation centres, depending on the criteria, depending on the particular events. So, as long as people are well aware of potentially the siting of these things, but also there is very clear communication about what's available, depending on what the nature of the event is, where it occurs-----

So, you'd see part of it is, in effect, an education of the public that before you move to an evacuation centre, you verify that it is operational?-- Agreed.

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All right?-- And this is part of - this is where, I think, we haven't yet made technology work for us as well as we could. For instance, what's wrong with having SMS alerts being utilised to say that X number of - "These evacuation centres are now active.", and, again, this comes down to community - sorry, if not SMS alerts, then utilising, like, Facebook pages, web pages, that sort of thing to say, "This is now - this is open. This is active. This is where you will get this level of support.", but community education is vital if you're going to have that type of system.

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Yes. At least for the time being, the real utility in the SMS either lies in either telling somebody to immediately evacuate where they are, or directing them to go to another medium that is better at giving detailed information?-- Agreed.

Radio, television and the like. Only one other matter, Deputy Commissioner: when it comes to sourcing evacuation centres, official or unofficial, and I'm now talking about the whole gamut of them, in the end, you wouldn't want to see, I take it, any limitation on those authorities that are charged with resourcing those centres exercising their judgment as to what the greatest priority is in answering that first?-- Are you saying - sorry, just so that I can understand what the question-----

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Certainly. Undoubtedly-----?-- What you're saying is if you've got five evacuation centres, you have more people turning up at Evacuation Centre A because that's where the greatest impact is of an event and they're all turning up there and you're pushing your resources to centre A to the detriment of the other three centres, in the first instance I would have no problem with that, but ultimately - and I think that's what you're talking about?

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Yes, that and-----?-- Prioritising-----

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Prioritising, and also, in the end, there may be some evacuation centres or some people who have set up informal ones who feel that they are necessitous than the judgment is made by, for example, the local district, and it will always be the case that you're going to have to ration resources in large events; that's correct, isn't it?-- There will always be a stress on resources during these events. There's no doubt about that.

Thanks, Deputy Commissioner. Thank you, Commissioner.

COMMISSIONER: Mr MacSporran?

MR MacSPORRAN: Thanks Commissioner. Deputy Commissioner, can I take you to page 9 of your statement?-- Thank you.

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Second paragraph there, you refer to a briefing on the 12th of October last year?-- That's right.

Was that the briefing that was given to the Senior Executive of the Police Service, as well as Directors-General of all the agencies in Government?-- It was a meeting of the State Disaster Management Group, which takes place at regular intervals outside of the times when we have to meet for - to deal with disasters, that's right.

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Now, you go on to describe that was a briefing given in part by Mr Davidson, on that occasion, from the Bureau?-- There are normal business discussed, but Mr Davidson's briefing was critical at that meeting.

You go on to describe the arrangements which were put in place, so far as the QPS were concerned, thereafter?-- Certainly as a result of what we were told, there was a - we saw that there was a need to advise our Senior Executive of the potential storm season that was coming - the wet season in Queensland.

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Now, looking back on that ramping up, as it were, of preparedness, did that prove to be beneficial in terms of dealing with the event ultimately?-- I must admit, I can't recall in recent history a warning sort of notice going out to our senior people along these lines, and I think it did play a part in ensuring that the plans - the local plans that were being taken in our regions and in our commands were considered adequate. So, the preparations that we had for the impending weather systems that were being provided - or the advice that was being provided to us by the Bureau of Meteorology - I mean, they didn't - they certainly didn't come down and say, "Look, you're going to have X number of inches of rain.", or, "You're going to have" - this or that, but they said the systems were showing that we could have a very volatile storm season and cyclone season in Queensland.

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And you appropriately took that seriously?-- Absolutely.

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Can I take you forward to page 16?-- 16?

Yes?-- Yep.

Now, just under halfway down that page, you say this: "In part, I would argue that the recency of the Disaster Management Review and the consultation that occurred across the State", and so on, what disaster management review are you

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 talking about there?-- After the event of The Gap storms,  
 which occurred over two years ago, I think it is now, a  
 decision was made - in fact, it was made, as I understand it,  
 by the Director-General of the Department of Community Safety,  
 together with the Chair of the SDMG - to look at a review of  
 the Disaster Management Act and the arrangements to make sure  
 that lessons weren't - and the processes that were in place  
 could be potentially enshrined or recommended to Government.  
 That review took place in 2009 and a report was developed and  
 ultimately that report became the basis of significant  
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 consultation between a range of stakeholders, including the  
 police, and out of that came decisions about moving forward,  
 changing the legislation, and I've mentioned a couple of the  
 changes already today, but ultimately it resulted in that  
 legislative change occurring on the 1st of November 2010 for  
 the arrangements for the Disaster Management Act. In the  
 period of 2009/2010, though, there was intense discussions and  
 ongoing conversations between key stakeholders about the  
 processes that would be needed to put the recommendations of  
 the review into place, how the relationships would work, what  
 communication channels would be necessary were we to be faced  
 with a crisis under the new Act arrangements, to the extent  
 that, as we got closer - sorry, as the recommendations were  
 settled and the Government became - and the Cabinet agreed to  
 certain of those recommendations, and we were moving forward  
 towards the legislative change, there was a lot of training  
 took place, there was - as I said, there was intense  
 consultation, particularly between EMQ and the Queensland  
 Police Service, but part of that consultation was, in fact,  
 with local government authorities right throughout Queensland,  
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 so there were discussions about how would the LDMG work within  
 this new environment, and I personally believe that the  
 recency of those discussions, that review, the changing - the  
 processes that were necessary to effect the change in the  
 legislation - well, one of the reasons why key stakeholders -  
 and I mean at all tiers - were very much aware of their roles  
 and responsibilities and very much aware of the new processes  
 and procedures that were necessary, and I think that that had  
 a very positive effect on outstanding work that was done right  
 across Queensland by all of those key stakeholders.  
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Thank you. Now, you mentioned that in February of this year  
 there was a debrief of - amongst other elements of your  
 service - the Senior Executive Service about lessons learned  
 from these events?-- Absolutely. That was only the Senior  
 Executive debriefs. Obviously there were debriefs occurring  
 right across the state in a planned and considered way, and  
 much of the information - much of that information has  
 obviously fed - where it needs to come up to the strategic  
 level has been fed back into that - those 70-odd  
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 recommendations that we've moved forward on.

You mentioned that you currently or recently received a draft  
 report concerning those 70 issues and the recommendations?--  
 I did, it's only been available to me this week and it's only  
 a draft at the moment, but I'm sure that within a few days it  
 will be a final and we're able to provide that to the  
 Commission.

That was my question, as to when you thought, realistically and sensibly, you could provide something of use to the Commission?-- Look, that particular document, I think I can do that early next week without any problems at all. The more fulsome report of how our system - and when I say that, I'm talking about the QPS system - coped with the events right from December right through until February, that is going to take a much longer period of time.

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Yes. Now, you understand, I think, that your - the timing of your appearance today has been dictated by a number of factors, not the least of which is commitments you have in the near future and, no doubt, the timing of the Commission's work around these issues. One difficulty that's arisen because of your appearance today is that there are other issues that would normally concern evidence you might give or respond to that is going to be heard by the Commission after today?-- Mmm.

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I take it you'd have no difficulty, firstly, if necessary, coming back to give further oral evidence in response to something that might arise?-- I'm-----

Or if you can't achieve that, or if it is not convenient to the Commission, at least providing an addendum statement to deal with issues that might be directed your way that are yet to be ventilated by the Commission?-- Firstly, I'm very grateful to the consideration given me by the Commission for coming in today, because I realise that there is a scheduling issue, but I am actually going overseas at the end of next week, and I'll be overseas for a few weeks. I have no difficulty at all - I'm at the Commission's disposal should they need me to provide extra - either oral testimony or further evidence by way of a statement - addendum statement.

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All right, thank you. Thank you, Commissioner.

MS WILSON: I have no re-examination, may it please.

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MS O'GORMAN: Neither do I.

MS WILSON: Oh, sorry.

COMMISSIONER: Thanks very much, Deputy Commissioner Stewart?-- Commissioner, thank you, but before I leave, could I just add one small thing by leave of the Commission?

Yes?-- And that is that I'm very grateful for the opportunity to be here today. I would make it very clear, though, that the work that I saw undertaken on behalf of the community of Queensland during that period from December right through until February I think was nothing less than absolutely outstanding, and I'm not just talking about the Queensland Police Service in this instance, I'm talking about all of those people who put themselves in harm's way, who went the extra mile, who stayed the extra hours and did the work to make Queensland a safe place, and I think it is a credit to

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everyone, including those members of the community, who contributed to all of this. I think it is an absolute credit to the systems that have been in place, and I'm the first one to say we can always do better, and I believe that this is what this Commission is about, and that's why I'm so grateful for the opportunity to be here, and to provide my opinion in relation to that. But I do believe that special mention needs to be made of the - just outstanding work that's been done, and when - and I had some figures here with me today about the - about what happened in Katrina and the loss of life there, and I'm sure that anyone who can Google that can see the impact of that. The fact that we - that our loss of life - tragic though any loss of life is - was so small with the events that were undertaken speaks volumes about how the community reacted, but also how the system played its part in keeping that community safe. So, I hope you don't mind me providing that bit of information, but it is - I think it is a critical issue for all of us to remember.

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Thanks very much?-- Thanks, Commissioner.

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WITNESS EXCUSED

MS WILSON: Commissioner, I have no further witnesses today.

COMMISSIONER: All right. But you have a string of statements-----

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MS WILSON: I do.

COMMISSIONER: -----of which I have been given the list. Ms Wilson, the most efficient way of doing it might be if I read the list I've been given and give each one a number, and you can tell me if I've missed any.

MS WILSON: Certainly.

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COMMISSIONER: Statement of Robert Reid, Exhibit 374.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 374"

COMMISSIONER: Keith McDonald, Exhibit 375.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 375"

COMMISSIONER: Richard Johnson, 376.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 376"

COMMISSIONER: Richard Wigg, 377.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 377"

COMMISSIONER: Simon Bolitho, 378.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 378"

COMMISSIONER: Mark Roderick, 379.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 379"

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COMMISSIONER: John Dohle, 380.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 380"

COMMISSIONER: Kate Girot, 381.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 381"

COMMISSIONER: Angela Newnham, 382.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 382"

COMMISSIONER: Donald Hannah, 383.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 383"

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COMMISSIONER: Brian Marfleet, 384.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 382"

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COMMISSIONER: James McDonald, which is described as an addendum statement, 385.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 385"

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COMMISSIONER: Peter Miller, 386.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 386"

COMMISSIONER: And Wayne Thompson, 387.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 387"

COMMISSIONER: Is that all correct so far?

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MS WILSON: Yes.

COMMISSIONER: And then there are a couple of other things which are on this list. I'm not sure - did you want to tender a submission of Telstra; is that right?

MS WILSON: That is the case.

COMMISSIONER: Third submission of Telstra, then, 388.

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ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 388"

COMMISSIONER: And there's a QFRS Certificate III - it goes on-----

MS WILSON: Communication Operations.

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COMMISSIONER: So, that's a separate document - 389. And then what's the next thing? Telecommunications Reference - or is that all part of the QFRS-----

MS WILSON: That all forms part of that one exhibit.

COMMISSIONER: All right. So, that's a QFRS Certificate III Manual, is it?

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MS WILSON: Yes.

COMMISSIONER: All right. So, that's 389.

ADMITTED AND MARKED "EXHIBIT 389"

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COMMISSIONER: Is that everything for the day?

MS WILSON: That's everything for the day.

COMMISSIONER: We'll adjourn until 10 o'clock on Monday.

THE COMMISSION ADJOURNED AT 4.16 P.M. TILL 10 A.M. ON MONDAY,  
16 MAY 2011

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