

GRC LDMG

Plans for 11.5 metre river peak at Goondiwindi

At the request of the SDCC the LDMG have put together plans for an 11.5m peak in the McIntyre River.

Council's levee system for the town of Goondiwindi will provide protection for a peak height of up to 11m.

Current Conditions

Latest forecasts are for the river to peak at 10.7m on Thursday 13th January. Advice from the BOM is that the additional flow required to increase from 10.7m to 11m is as much as 3 times the flow that we are expecting due to the outbreak across areas outside of the levee area. It is not likely that an 11.5m river peak is possible during this event.

Transport Routes

Cunningham Highway to Warwick is closed by up to 300mm but should be passable later today.

Newell Highway to Moree and further south would be a viable route with limited issues in terms of flooding in that direction.

Impacts of an 11.5 metre peak

An 11.5 m river peak would see the levee overtopped by up to half a metre and water inundates the majority of the town of Goondiwindi. Many properties would see over a metre of water through houses. The only area that may remain above water level is a small sand ridge through the centre of town.

Our modeling indicates that a probable maximum flood (2 x 1976 flood) would result in a gauge height at Goondiwindi of 10.85m. Given that the 11.5m flood is beyond the range of all modeling we have carried out, we cannot be certain of impacts.

At 11.5m we would therefore suggest that a local evacuation centre would not be of any value and complete mandatory evacuation out of the town would be required. Based upon current conditions and provided that the advice of such heights is received at least 24 to 36hours before peaking, it is likely that some routes may be open to Warwick.

Upon receiving advice of an 11.5 metre river peak we would need to immediately arrange for the evacuation of the following people to appropriate facilities in a major area:

Goondiwindi Hospital (unknown quantity)
Kaloma Home for the Aged (approx. 90 patients)

The airport and the route to Warwick are likely to be impacted once the river reaches 10.8m such that these options may be closed.

QFCI

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The balance of the town would require evacuation and provided that we could provide notice today they would have options to move to the north to Inglewood and Warwick and to many centres to the south. Whilst many would move under their own steam, it would be a significant effort to move up to 6000 people.

Given other events in Brisbane and Toowoomba it may be necessary for a significant evacuation centre to be established in Warwick to cater for those not able to find relief with friends in appropriate rural areas or to the south. Local police would remain in the area to provide security and would require some supply.

In short we would require a flood advice of 11.5 metres around 36 hours before the river is expected to reach a gauge height of 10.8 metres to initiate these plans otherwise the event would be beyond our resources.