



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE  
STATEMENT OF WITNESS



Occurrence #: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: 07/03/2011

**Statement of**

Name of witness: BOND, Rowan Thomas

Date of birth: [REDACTED] Age: [REDACTED] Occupation: Police officer

**Police officer taking statement**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Rank: \_\_\_\_\_ Reg. no.: \_\_\_\_\_

Region/Command/Division: \_\_\_\_\_ Station: \_\_\_\_\_

**Statement:**

**Rowan Thomas BOND states:-**

1. I am a Superintendent of Police, Officer in Charge of the Bundaberg Police District.
2. By virtue of that appointment I am also the District Disaster Coordinator (DDC) under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act 2003.
3. I commenced duty with the Queensland Police Service on 14 January 1974 as a police cadet and I was sworn in on 14 October 1977.
4. I have 34 years of sworn policing experience and have served at Rockhampton, Gladstone, Mackay and Bundaberg and have served in the role of operational role of General Duties, Traffic Officer, various staff roles, various coordination roles, supervising Inspector and District Officer.
5. On 15 December 2010 I was transferred to and commenced my current role as District Officer and DDC Bundaberg District. Prior to this I was also DDC of Mackay District and Gladstone District. The role and responsibilities of the DDC is to manage and coordinate the business of the district group, ensure, as far as practicable, that the group moves forward and performs its functions as prescribed under section 23 of the Disaster Management Act 2003, prepare and maintain a District Disaster Management Plan which must be consistent with the disaster management guidelines, ensure the Chief Executive, Department of

Exhibit Number: \_\_\_\_\_

**QFCI**

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

11/10/11

*TW*

[REDACTED]

(Witness's signature)


(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

**CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: BOND, Rowan Thomas**

Community Safety is advised of any temporary or permanent changes to the appointment of a chairperson, deputy chairperson or executive officer of a district group, and regularly report to the State Disaster Management Group about the performance by the district group of it's functions.

- 6. In performing the role of DDC, I received training in various facets of disaster management including practical experience in disaster management, database/systems training, desk top exercises/scenarios, QPS or external courses etc.
- 7. I have activated in the capacity of DDC in 2003 for Cyclone Beni, 2004 for Citrus Canker Outbreak, 2008 for Mackay floods, 2009 for Cyclone Hamish, 2010 for Cyclone Ului, and 2010 / 2011 for Bundaberg floods.
- 8. I commenced duty at Bundaberg on 15 December 2010. I activated the Bundaberg DDMG to 'Alert' phase on 26 December 2010 in response to information from Bureau of Meteorology hydrology department regarding concerning rises in the Burnett River catchment. It was their assessment that such rises would result in flooding to Gayndah, Mundubbera and subsequently Bundaberg.
- 9. In response to the written requirement of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry dated 28 February 2011, I provide the following information:
- 10. On the 13 December 2010, I informally met with the Mayor of Bundaberg and the CEO prior to commencing my appointment at Bundaberg, and discussed disaster preparedness with them. I was satisfied with the information provided in relation to Bundaberg Regional Council, particularly regarding the actual city. I undertook to further my knowledge regarding the remote locations of Bundaberg Regional Council, and North Burnett Regional Council as soon as practicable upon my commencement of duty on the 15 December 2010.
- 11. On 17 December 2010, as part of my orientation, I met with the District Executive Officer, Sergeant Grantley Marcus and Deputy DDC Inspector Kevin Guteridge. I was provided a detailed briefing of the Bundaberg District Disaster planning process and situational preparedness status. Of particular interest to me

 (Witness's signature)	(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations's signature)	(Signature of police officer preparing statement)
--	--	--

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

was the preparedness of the District Plan, and both Local Disaster groups and their plans.

12.I was advised that the Bundaberg District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) met on a regular basis and was well supported by its members. The Bundaberg DDMG Disaster Management Plan was created in 2005 and had been revised on a yearly basis, but due to amendments to the Disaster Management Act 2003 was currently being significantly upgraded by [REDACTED] in his recently appointed role as Executive Officer. [REDACTED] informed me that the most significant changes to the Act, together with the changes as a result of regionalisation of Councils were being reflected in the current Plan.

13.I was advised that both the Bundaberg Regional Council and North Burnett Council were the two councils located within the Bundaberg Disaster District and that both councils had Local Disaster Management Groups (LDMG) and Plans in place. I was advised that Bundaberg LDMG was in a competent state of readiness, especially after the appointment of retired police and former [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as their Disaster Management Officer. The North Burnett LDMG was not in the same state of disaster management readiness, but with the strategic alliance created between both councils this preparedness was being significantly improved.

14.I was advised that [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] had arranged and attended a North Burnett LDMG meeting on 7 December 2010 and were satisfied that the LDMG was moving forward and was in a sufficient state of disaster preparedness for the 2010/2011 cyclone season.

15.I was advised that the DDMG and both LDMG's met on a regular basis and had productive group members. The Bundaberg DDMG had held its last meeting in late October 2010 to ensure an appropriate state of readiness and preparation for the 2010 / 2011 cyclone season.

<div style="background-color: black; width: 100%; height: 20px; margin-bottom: 5px;"></div> (Witness's signature)	(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations's signature)	(Signature of police officer preparing statement)
---	--	--

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

16. I was advised that multi-media public awareness programs had already commenced to educate and improve the public state of preparedness for this cyclone season.
17. Between 27 December 2010 and 15 January 2011 the Bundaberg Disaster District was significantly affected by two separate flood disaster events. The first occurred between 27 December 2010 and 1 January 2011. The second occurred between 12 January 2011 and 15 January 2011. The geography of the district together with the excessive rainfall in the catchment of the Burnett River caused, firstly North Burnett, then Bundaberg Regional Councils to be severely affected by flooding.
18. On 29 December 2011 following consultation with members of the DDMG and application to the Minister, a formal Disaster Declaration under the provisions of the Disaster Management Act 2003 was declared for the Bundaberg Disaster District. This declaration remained in place until it expired on 12 January 2011. During the first flood event both Bundaberg Regional Council and North Burnett Regional Council areas were significantly affected, whilst for the second flood event only the Bundaberg Regional Council area was affected. The second flood event did not affect the community to the same degree as the first event. The second event was due to the run off into Barambah Creek and the Burnett River following heavy rainfall in the area north of Toowoomba and the South Burnett area.
19. During the first flood event the Bundaberg District Disaster Coordination Centre (DDCC) was operated from the Bundaberg Regional Council office and adjacent to the Bundaberg Local Disaster Coordination Centre.
20. On 25 December 2010 I commenced regular communications with members of the Bundaberg LDMG and North Burnett LDMG with regards to heavy rain that had the potential to cause flooding within Bundaberg disaster district. This communication was in particular with CEO [REDACTED] from North Burnett, and [REDACTED] from Bundaberg. I became aware that the heights of

[REDACTED]  
 (Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
 Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
 preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

the Burnett River were rapidly rising in the North Burnett area with a close watch being made of the river heights in the Gayndah and Mundubbera communities.

21. On 26 December 2010 the Burnett River heights were still rising and close to the major height classification. I placed the Bundaberg DDMG in the 'alert' phase of disaster activation in support of North Burnett and Bundaberg Regional Councils. I maintained regular communications with representatives of the Bundaberg LDMG and North Burnett LDMG, ensuring they had the local capabilities and availability of support services to handle the situation. This communication occurred on numerous occasions daily where information was exchanged, situation reports received with assistance and support provided. On this date, I caused the first of 15 Situation reports to be prepared and forwarded to the State Disaster Management Group regarding the conduct of business of the District Co-ordination Centre. These reports were forwarded at approximately 15:00hrs daily from the Co-ordination Centre.
22. On 27 December 2010 the Burnett River heights reached significant levels and caused flooding to a number of houses in Mundubbera and Gayndah townships. Also low lying areas of Bundaberg City were beginning to become inundated. A number of other small communities were being affected by the flood waters, with numerous road closures occurring across the district.
23. On 28 December 2010 I formally activated the Bundaberg DDMG and called an unscheduled meeting for that morning. I subsequently placed the DDMG in the "Leaning Forward – Level 1" phase of disaster activation. As part of this process, I sought to meet with the Chair of the District Recovery Committee, and discussed recovery processes planned and in place and assistance that was to be provided to the recovery of the District in the forthcoming days.
24. Throughout the flood disaster I conducted regular conversations and meetings with members of the LDMG's, DDMG, SDMG, police personnel and senior management within the QPS. Records relating to the nature and timings of those conversations and meetings that were strategic in nature including critical

  
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

decisions regarding community safety, rescue and recovery were recorded and are contained in the DDMG meeting minutes, the District Disaster Coordination Centre (DDCC) log, formal Situational Reports (SITREPS), QPS senior management Dot Point reports and in my QPS diary. I am able to produce these DDMG minutes, DDCC log, SITREPS, Dot Point reports and QPS diary.

25. Also contained within these documents are written accounts of the directions, measures and actions relating to these flood events undertaken by me and other members of the DDMG in relation to the:

- management, response and recovery operations;
- resourcing, coordination and deployment of personnel and equipment;
- management, maintenance and reinstatement of essential services including water, power and communications;
- informing of the community about the floods and responses thereto;
- availability and provisioning of services and logistical support, including assessments of the adequacy and timeliness thereof;
- involvement of the Australian Defence Force in relation to the provisioning of emergency measures and services, including the assessments of the adequacy and timeliness thereof; and
- management practices implemented to protect private and public property and preserve vital infrastructure.

26. As part of the post-disaster assessment process a series of debriefings were held throughout the Bundaberg Disaster District by disaster managements group, agencies and organisations to address the performance thereof. These debriefings also assessed the adequacy of equipment and communications systems, and the adequacy of the community's responses. In my role as DDC I attended and actively participated in a number of these debriefings. These included debriefings of SES operations, both Bundaberg and North Burnett Disaster Co-ordination Centres, Recovery Committee and the District Disaster Management Group. Formal notes in the form of minutes were taken in relation to these debriefings and included information as to what occurred and possible

  
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

improvements in processes and plans for future operations. I am able to produce these written minutes.

27. During the event, I personally took part in scheduled and unscheduled teleconferences with the State Disaster Management Group on at least a daily basis, where I briefed the Group on Bundaberg District operations and also took the opportunity to flag forthcoming requests and requirements. At a number of these teleconferences, I included local disaster managers and District group members who also provided information to scope the situation and address requirements. For example, during an unscheduled teleconference, resupply using RAAF assets and resources was discussed with the State Group, who facilitated the supply to the Bundaberg community.

28. I also joined with local disaster managers meeting with visiting dignitaries including the Prime Minister, Premier, State Disaster Co-ordinator and communicated the progress of response and particularly recovery of the community. A number of these dignitaries received written and oral presentations as to the response and recovery of the District.

29. I also took part in teleconferences (normally together with Inspector Guteridge) with senior QPS executive regarding both disaster operations and also police response requirements. I provided dot point briefings to my Assistant Commissioner on a daily basis regarding mostly police operational activity and also disaster management within the Bundaberg District. I am able to produce those documents. I also requested and received legal opinions from the internal QPS legal services in relation to Disaster management legislation and also application of the powers of DDC during disaster situations. Those opinions are recorded and can be provided.

30. I also regularly contacted DDCs from adjoining Districts to discuss mutual issues, resupply and QPS staffing requirements which included provision of respective staff to outside district operations in support of the disaster efforts. An example of this was the use of staff from outside the district for anti-looting

  
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

patrols of Bundaberg, and the provision of staff to Gympie. The DDCs also pooled information together and arranged a convoy of semi trailers to be escorted through Gympie floods to resupply Maryborough and Bundaberg with essential food, cleansing and medical items for the three communities.

31. I am pleased to state that as a result of actions taken by all disaster management groups, agencies and organisations within the Bundaberg Disaster District during these flood disasters there was no loss of human life and no serious injury suffered to any persons. The response to the flood disaster largely was a smooth operation with the plans transitioning to an effective response. Throughout the event, a transition from response to recovery document was maintained, to provide written support to the identification of triggers for stand down of response and support of recovery. I am able to provide a copy of this document which was signed off by myself on 6 January 2011.

32. With regards to the flood disasters that affected the Bundaberg disaster district I provide the following summary.

33. Within the Bundaberg Regional Council:-

- (i) 208 houses flood inundated (8 re-inundated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion);
- (ii) 380 yards flood inundated (38 re-inundated on the 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion);
- (iii) 280 businesses flood affected (21 re-affected on the 2<sup>nd</sup> occasion);
- (iv) Primary industry significantly impacted;
- (v) 2 evacuations centres operated with 87 persons cared for;
- (vi) 173 persons registered as evacuees;
- (vii) Temporary joint emergency response centre established at North Bundaberg;
- (viii) Temporary shelters operated at Childers and Gin Gin to support large numbers of stranded motorists;
- (ix) Significant damage caused to road infrastructure;
- (x) Emergency road, marine and air transport food re-supply required;
- (xi) Some communities cut-off from main centres since mid-December 2010;
- (xii) Major recovery process required; and

(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)



CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

(xiii) Temporary Telstra communications cable put in place to support northern and western communities.

## 34. Within the North Burnett Regional Council:-

- (i) 26 houses flood inundated (22 in Mundubbera & 4 in Gayndah);
- (ii) 46 yards flood inundated (18 in Mundubbera & 28 in Gayndah);
- (iii) 90% of local industry impacted (mostly primary producers);
- (iv) No evacuations centres operated but 82 persons self-evacuated to friends and family
- (v) Significant damage caused to road infrastructure;
- (vi) Mundubbera town water damaged supplies;
- (vii) Emergency road and air transport food re-supply required and provided by special convoy, helicopter resupply and assistance of RAAF Hercules air assets.
- (viii) Some communities cut-off from main centres since mid-December 2010; and
- (ix) Major recovery process required.

35. There are no special considerations that should be given to the District by reason of particular regional or geographical differences. A significant concern was held for the long term isolation of communities around the Perry River, Mingo Crossing and the Goodnight Scrubs area. This resulted in large scale operations to continuously resupply those communities and transport community members to and from the area. Whilst long term, it did not present significant operational issues to the SES or other emergency services.

36. There are several features of the disaster preparation and planning stages or the disaster response and recovery operations which, in my opinion, presented some difficulty or may require practical or legislative change to improve future disaster management in the District.

- (i) Alignment of QPS District Boundaries to match Regional Council boundaries. The North Burnett regional Council, like a number of others in the State bisect police districts, therefore the District Officer and DDC (the same

(Witness's sign

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **BOND, Rowan Thomas**

person) have differing geographic areas of responsibility. Whilst a collegiate approach amongst District officers prevents significant concern, the alignment of disaster and police districts would simplify operations and interaction with local government officials and disaster managers.

(ii) Implementation of Traffic Management Guidelines to divert vehicular traffic with a view to preventing motorists becoming stranded at smaller communities and significantly affecting the sustainability of these small communities. The issue evolves as travellers continue their journeys until they cannot drive further due to road closures. This places significant strain on small town infrastructure and its ability to feed and house the travellers who are not in fact stranded. Suggested that community education and guidelines facilitate the travellers stop at the last major community before the road closure and are not permitted to influx the smaller communities.

(iii) That instruments of direction regarding extraordinary retail store opening to facilitate resupply of the community be less equivocal and takes in all circumstances including the ability or presumption that smaller retail outlets which are legally open under normal circumstances are not unduly disadvantaged.

37. The information contained in this statement is provided on the basis of the knowledge, information and material currently available to me and my interpretation of the information sought by the requirement at this point in time

[Redacted Signature]

R.T. BOND

<b>Justices Act 1886</b>	
I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:	
(1)	This written statement by me dated 07/03/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 10 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
(2)	I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false.
.....	[Redacted Signature] Signature
Signed at Bundaberg this.....9th.....day of March 2011.	

_____ (Witness's signature)	_____ (Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/ Commissioner for Declarations's signature)	_____ (Signature of police officer preparing statement)
--------------------------------	---	---