

DOCUMENTS TO TENDER

JOHN McLEOD

Volume 1

QFCI

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Date:

4/10/11

Exhibit Number:

701

Statement of Witness

Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

<i>Name of Witness</i>	John Alexander McLEOD
<i>Date of Birth</i>	
<i>Address and contact details</i>	C/O 39 Edward Street, Brisbane
<i>Occupation</i>	Safety and Security Manager
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Detective Sergeant Stephen Platz
<i>Date taken</i>	13/09/2011

John Alexander McLEOD states:

1. I am the Safety and Security Manager for the Stamford Land Corporation Pty Ltd trading as the Stamford Plaza Hotel located at 39 Edward Street, Brisbane. My role relates to the security and safety of guests, staff and property and I have been employed in this position for nearly four years. The Stamford Hotel is a multi-storey luxury hotel built in 1984 on the site of the old naval offices located adjacent to the Brisbane River. I believe before it was built there were only a wharf and some minor structures. I am aware to the best of my knowledge that this site flooded during the 1974 floods. The Hotel was originally owned by Beaufort Heritage at the time of construction. Stamford subsequently purchased the Hotel and Lease from Beaufort Heritage some 11 years ago.
2. The Brisbane River is only approximately 10-20 metres from the rear of the hotel and the ground floor of the basement is only just above river height. Within the basement are car parks (where up to seventy vehicles can be stored), offices, showers, chillers, boilers, sewerage pumps, computer servers, fire control and the Energex sub station that connects power to the building. The building was designed to house this infrastructure in the basement and there is no room for it to be placed anywhere else.

Witness
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Signature of officer

400 George Street Brisbane
GPO Box 1738 Brisbane
Queensland 4001 Australia
Telephone 1300 309 634
Facsimile +61 7 3405 9750
www.floodcommission.qld.gov.au
ABN 65 959 415 158

3. At midday on Tuesday the 10th of January 2011 I returned to work during my recreation leave due to reports of possibly flooding in Brisbane City. Upon arrival at work staff had already started to make preparations and had begun sand bagging and taping the basement doors. I made some further inquiries with regards to the possible flood heights. As a result of the information I received, I estimated that the flood would inundate the basement and sandbagging would be useless. I then advised senior managers and staff to start evacuating the basement of as much equipment as possible. As a result, staff began moving equipment to a higher level but due to the sheer amount of items in the basement it was impossible to move everything. I managed, however, to get all of the guests cars out of the basement.
4. During the evening we monitored the river and watched it rise towards our property. At about 6.20pm I received a phonecall from Energex who stated that they had to protect their asset, referring to the substation, and had to come and cut the power. At this time we had about two hundred guests in the building and without a separate circuit, we could not utilise the lifts, lights or other powered devices in the building. At about 10.10pm Energex came and cut the power.
5. I can't recall the exact time but late at night on the Tuesday the river overflowed the boardwalk and started to come into the corridor of the loading dock. I do recall that about 03.00 am on the morning of 12 /01/11 the water level within the basement had reached a level over 1 metre and rising. I couldn't understand why the water was still rising when it was suppose to be low tide. The water continued to rise and when high tide arrived, the flood rate increased significantly. I also noticed that the water contained a heavy mix of fresh and salt water, due to the incompatibility of the water types.

6. At 3.00am on Wednesday the 12th day of January 2011 the river had flooded the basement. The substation and all other infrastructure were now underwater and there were concerns it could flood the ground level. Preparations had been made to evacuate guests but unfortunately many did not want to leave the building. With the power cut we had to utilise candles, torches and any other lighting to illuminate the stairwells, rooms and other parts of the building.
7. Later on Wednesday morning the flood reached its peak height came to the top of the basement. The flood subsided after this stage and by Monday 17th the water had drained from the basement. I surveyed the damage to the basement and saw that the flood water had picked up water tanks and thrown them against our roller doors causing significant damage. Furthermore, the servers, substation, offices, tools, walls, floors, fridges, boilers and other infrastructure were destroyed. [REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
[REDACTED]
8. The hotel was without power for 7 weeks and all commercial activity had ceased. All 138 staff assisted in the clean up and by the 31st March the hotel was up and running again. Energex later placed a new sub station back in the basement, as due to its size and weight, there is no where else to place it. The computer servers have since been placed on an upper level in the building. Due to the design of the building and its close proximity to the river, it limits the flood mitigation options for the building. Despite this limitation, I have proposed that we palletise equipment in the basement so that it can be moved quickly and to have the ability to cut the circuit from the basement, so that our generator which is on the roof can operate the rest of the building if the power is cut.

9. During the flood event I took a number of photographs of flooding in and around the Stamford Plaza. I am able to produce these photographs.

Exhibit: **Series of photographs of flooding in and around the Stamford Plaza Hotel during the 2011 floods**

Marked Exhibit No/...

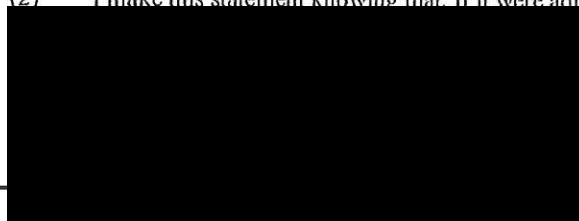


Justices Act 1886

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

(1) This written statement by me dated 13/09/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 4 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and

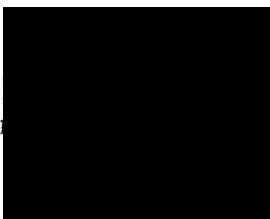
(2) I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to ...s false.



.....Signature

per.....2011

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Note

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