

Statement of Witness

Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

Name of Witness	Darren James RUMBELOW
Date of Birth	
Address and contact details	C/- Lowood Police Station
Occupation	Police Officer (Senior Constable 27236)
Officer taking statement	Detective Senior Sergeant 6091
Date taken	13 April 2011

Darren RUMBELOW states:

1. I am a Senior Constable of Police currently working at the Lowood Police Station. I have been working at the Lowood Police Station since August 2010, and prior to that I was working at the Ipswich Police Station.
2. I was previously employed in the both the Australian Federal Police and the South Australian Police. Most of my career in the SA Police was in general policing. My service in the AFP related to General Policing as part of the ACT Police.
3. The Lowood Police station has approximately 10 staff members, which are all general duties staff. We are responsible for Lowood, Fernvale, Wivenhoe Pocket, Coominya, and back down to Atkinson's Dam and parts of Brightview. This all forms part of the Lowood Division, Ipswich District.
4. I do not play any part in the local disaster management for the Lowood Division.
5. On Monday 10 January 2011 I was rostered to work from 4pm to 12 midnight. I was working with Constable Brian GIRFFIN, however when I got to work I was told that Constable GRIFFIN had been called in earlier that day due to water being over the road at Brisbane Valley Highway, FERNVALE. Due to this he had been stood down and would not commence his shift until 5:00 pm. When I started my shift I relieved the day shift crew and I was told that Constable LAUHLAN was doing traffic control on the Brisbane Valley Highway as the Brisbane River had come up over the bridge. In the week leading up to the flood we had had on and off again rain where we had some taskings relating to minor flooding.

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6. I decided to commence patrols in the area of Jensen's Swamp and I saw that the road was under water. At this time I was approached by a member of the public and advised that the water level at Forest Hill-Fernvale Road near the intersections of Prospect Street and Railway Street LOWOOD had risen onto the road.

7. I went back to Lowood Police Station and collected Constable GRIFFIN and went to that area at Forest Hill-Fernvale Road. Immediately to the north of this stretch of Forest Hill-Fernvale Road is a large section of the Brisbane River. About 6 - 8 kilometres to the north is Wivenhoe Dam. The river runs in a roughly southerly direction from the dam until it gets to Forest Hill-Fernvale Road and turns to the east and runs parallel to the roadway towards Fernvale. I saw that the river had risen considerably and had spilled onto the roadway. The eastbound lane was partially covered in water from the Brisbane River. It was approximately 6 inches deep for a distance of about 30 metres. I could still get past the area at that stage so we continued onto Fernvale on the Brisbane Valley Highway where Constable LAUHLAN was working. She was about 400 metres north of the intersection blocking the highway. I decided to move the road block back towards Forest Hill-Fernvale Road.

8. I decided to block off the intersection of Forest Hill-Fernvale Road and the Brisbane Valley Highway, preventing traffic from entering Forest Hill-Fernvale Road at that location. I left Constable GRIFFIN to conduct traffic control at that intersection, and took Constable LAUHLAN back to Lowood Police Station. On the way back to the police station I saw that the level had risen over both lanes at Forest Hill-Fernvale Road at the previous area about 200 metres east of the intersection with Prospect Road. I made the decision to block off Forest Hill-Fernvale Road at the intersection of Prospect Street/Railway Street due to safety issues. I made a request to Ipswich Police Communications to arrange for signage to be delivered to block the road.

9. I kept that road blocked from about 5.30pm until about 7.00pm. I was careful also to manage the people who had come to look at the rising flood water. Radio communications are regularly ineffective along the stretch of Forest Hill-Fernvale Road that extends from the intersection of Prospect Street/Railway Street towards Fernvale. Generally we can hear transmissions being broadcast, but are not able to be received when we transmit from that location. This applies to both vehicle and hand held radios. I parked the Police vehicle across the road with the emergency lights activated to form a roadblock about 100 metres from the intersection of Prospect Street/Railway Street. As I

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did not have a good view of the water levels from that location I had to walk about 100 metres east of the Police vehicle along the roadway to visually monitor the water levels.

10. A large crowd had gathered to see the water level and while most were compliant and cooperative some wanted to walk in the water and take photos. Due to my concerns for their safety I chose to stay near the water and monitor their behaviour as well as monitor the water level. This meant that each time I was called via the Police radio I had to run the 100 metres back to my vehicle to respond.

11. At about 6.30pm to 7.00pm I was tasked to attend a job at 70 Schimkes Lane Clarendon in relation to information received that several people were trapped by rising flood waters in a house. To get to that address I had to travel about 8 – 10 kilometres to the west of Lowood, along Clarendon Road and cross the Lockyer Creek at Watson's Bridge. When I got there I came across a road closed sign and I could see that the bridge was under water. The water had totally submerged the bridge and was fast flowing. I was aware that the address was on the other side of Watson's Bridge.

12. At that time I was contacted by Police mobile telephone which is kept in the police vehicle. We have a mobile telephone for each police vehicle because of the communication difficulties we have in the division. The caller was a Senior Sergeant stating he was from the Major Incident Room (MIR). This was the first time that I realised that something may have been wrong as the police service had opened an MIR to manage some type of event. I am not sure whether the MIR was at Ipswich or Brisbane. The Senior Sergeant was following up on the job at Schimkes Lane regarding the rising flood water. I told him that I could not get through and told him that I would call the informant. At this time I had not been briefed by any person about the level of the flood event or whether we needed to be concerned about rising water levels and this phone call, in conjunction with seeing the water of Watson's Bridge, was the first indication I had that a major incident was unfolding. Until then, in the presence of no other information, I had assumed that the water over Forest Hill-Fernvale Road was attributed to water releases from Wivenhoe Dam.

13. I telephoned someone at that Schimkes Road address and they told me they had heard of a wall of water coming in their direction from Grantham. I had had other inquiries from members of the public about the wall of water earlier in the evening, and I had told them that I had not heard anything about it. With my knowledge of the area I could not see how a wall of water could come across such a wide open area of farmland such as the area

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between Lowood and Gatton. During the conversation with the informant at the job address, they indicated to me that they were concerned about the water rising in the Lockyer Creek but they were not in any immediate danger. The water had not reached the home. I advised them to call back if the water created a dangerous situation.

14. After speaking with the Schimkes Road residents I again spoke with the Senior Sergeant at the MIR and told him of the conversation that I had had with them. It was at this stage that I realised that this event was bigger than the normal isolated flooding or just water released from Wivenhoe Dam. I am not sure during which of the two telephone calls with the Senior Sergeant, but on one of them, I told him I had had numerous inquiries about a 7 metre wall of water and I asked should I be concerned about it. While I don't recall the entire conversation, part of his response was words to the effect that there was no wall of water coming to my area.

15. I started making my way back to the Lowood township. I was aware that Constable GRIFFIN had been relieved and we had arranged by either mobile phone or radio to meet at Walter Street Lowood. I had started to think that it was going to be necessary to evacuate certain areas east of Lindemans Road near the intersection of Railway Street where the houses back onto the Brisbane River. When I arrived at the meeting with Constable GRIFFIN I found that he had already had a conversation with Matt PINDER of the SES and they had reached the same conclusion. It had been decided to set up evacuation points at Lowood High School Gymnasium, the Lowood CWA Hall, and Tarampa State School.

16. At this stage Constable GRIFFIN and I decided to go and start knocking on doors at Lindemans Road to advise them to move to higher ground. The first house I went to was a two storey house that runs off of Foresthill-Fernvale Road, near the sewerage treatment plant. The back of the house backs on to the Brisbane River. On arrival at that location I was contacted on the telephone by Acting OIC Sergeant Jackie MUNN who was off duty at the time. She told me that she had been contacted by either a Superintendent or Inspector and was asked what was going on. She asked me what I knew and why I had not called her. I advised her that I had not been briefed on any incident and had only just become aware that a major incident was unfolding. I advised her that Constable GRIFFIN and I had commenced evacuating houses near the river in the vicinity of Lindemans Road. SGT MUNN advised me she was on her way to work and was recalling other officers. I arranged to meet her back at the station later.

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17. The resident of the house I had attended was a 92 year old man. I made contact with some friends of his and arranged to meet them in Railway Street to leave him in their care. As I went to leave the property, the vehicle I was in, a Hyundai van, became stuck on some wet grass in a depression. I could not get any traction and had to radio for help getting the vehicle out. A dog squad unit, D1, was tasked in a 4WD vehicle to come to my location to assist. At this time Lowood Police Station was not issued a 4WD vehicle despite numerous efforts by the OIC to arrange for one to be issued to us over the previous months. The Hyundai van was at our station on a trial basis and it had been reported that the van was inadequate for country use due to various issues.
18. Before D1 were able to make it to my location an SES crew came to my aid and pushed me off of the wet grass and I made my way out of the yard. I drove the elderly gentleman to Railway Street and dropped him off. I returned to the station where I liaised with D1, the Dog Squad Crew. I discussed with them the option of them staying in our Division for some time as we may have required the use of their 4WD vehicle to conduct further evacuations.
19. By the time I had returned to the station Constable GRIFFIN had finished the door knocks of the Lindeman Street area. I am not sure what time I got back to the Lowood Police Station but I think it could have been anywhere from 9.00pm to 10.00pm. D1 stayed at the Lowood Police Station for some time. After some more time SGT MUNN and other officers arrived at the station. Amongst them were Constables LAUHLAN, CARTER, MCCOOMBES, and WALKER. For some time I liaised with SGT MUNN about what had occurred. I do not recall what else I did that night but I terminated my shift at about 1.30am. As Constable GRIFFIN could not return home due to being cut off from flood waters, he stayed at my house that night.
20. At around 7.00am the following morning on Tuesday 11 January 2011 Constable GRIFFIN and I went back to the station as we had heard that they were going to evacuate the aged care facility at Main Street Lowood. Sgt MUNN, Constable LAUHLAN, Constable WALKER, Constable GRIFFIN and I went to the Glenwood Blue Care Aged Care Facility in Main Street Lowood Constable GRIFFIN and I travelled in my personal car as Constable MCCOOMBES had taken the Hyundai van to FERNVALE, leaving only one Police Commodore sedan in Lowood. We expected that we would need extra transport for the evacuees. Constable GRIFFIN and I arrived there first and spoke with Nursing Staff and were taken to the western side of the building which backs onto a small creek. We saw that the creek was a raging torrent and was posing a threat to the

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buildings. We were told that there were 29 residents, 3 of which were bed ridden. QAS and QFRS arrived shortly after and I got staff to bring the bed ridden patients to the front of the building. I had the remainder of the 26 patients brought up to the front corridor so that we could record the details of all of the patients.

21. The other police arrived and I briefed Sgt MUNN and it was decided that Constable LAUHLAN would stand at the door with a list of all of the patients, and as each patient was taken out of the building we recorded who was removed. All bed ridden patients were taken to the Lowood High School Gymnasium first followed by the more mobile.

22. It was about this time that I heard over the police radio a report of a vehicle at Minden with a family trapped on the roof. The information was that the family were in the Plain Creek near the Minden State School and needed assistance. They could only be reached at the Northern side of the creek. I was standing with the Local QFRS Captain whom I know as Murray.

23. I had trouble getting through to the Police Communications Ipswich on the hand held radio but eventually got through to them. I liaised with the QFRS Captain and it was arranged that I would go with a QFRS crew of two officers and we would take a 4WD single cab fire truck and approach Minden from the north. We went south on Lowood-Minden Road to the intersection of Stone Gully Road and found that the water height from experience would make it impassable to the immediate south of Schmidts Road. I tried to notify QPS Communications on my hand held radio but could not get through. The QFRS officers notified their communications section to notify the QPS Comms of the situation.

24. At that point we were requested by QFRS to attend 9 Stone Gully Road COOLANA regarding a family being trapped in a home by flood waters. The house was a metre off the ground and water was about an inch under the floor boards. We could see the front porch was under water and the back porch was nearly under water. I could see a male person on the back porch, and the information had said that there were two adults and two children requiring evacuation. We parked on the road out front of the house and decided to go into the house to retrieve the occupants. I cut the barbed wire fence and the QFRS officer and I went through the flood waters on foot and approached the house. We retrieved the occupants, carrying the children and assisting the adults, back to the fire truck. As we only had a single cab truck we took the family by foot along the flooded roadway to a neighbour's house that was situated on higher ground, and left them there.

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25. We left and headed back towards Lowood. We attended a few locations on the way back to assess water levels and eventually returned to the Glenwood Blue Care Nursing Home. The evacuation had been completed.
26. I then returned to the Police Station at Lowood. I attended to tasks over the next few hours. At about 1.00pm Constable CARTER and I went to the intersection of Prospect Street and Park Street. There is a small creek to the west of that intersection that crosses under the roadway. We saw that the road was cut by the creek which had flooded over the roadway to a depth of several feet of fast flowing water. This meant that Lowood was cut off from the west. We were then tasked to attempt to reach a house at Lindemans Road. We crossed a small amount of water on Main Street near the golf course and turned into Lindemans Road. We saw that the flood waters had cut off that road and we could not make it any further. We turned around and saw that in the two or three minutes since we had passed the golf course, the water level had risen about four feet and had cut off our return. We then retreated to high ground. We became flooded in on the hill near Macadamia Street near the intersection of Clarendon Road. We were cut off on this "island" for about an hour. During that time we discovered that we had hit some debris in the flood waters and had suffered a punctured tyre that needed changing.
27. After changing the tyre and liaising with some residents in Macadamia Street and the surrounds, we saw the flood water over Main Street had subsided and we then went back to Lowood Police Station and attended to the checking of water levels around the Division towards Glenmorgan Vale. The road was cut to the east and the south of the Glamorgan Vale Hotel. The roads were cut off to the north at Clarendon Road near the intersection of Patrick Estate Road and to the east on Foresthill-Fernvale Road near the intersection of Prospect/Railway Street. The creek on Prospect Street near the intersection of Park Street had subsided but there was damage and some shallow water over the road. It was now passable to the west as far as Brightview Road/Foresthill-Fernvale Road intersection where the flood waters extended towards Brightview for some distance. Lowood Minden Road was cut south of Schulz Road.
28. At about 4.00pm I was solo and was tasked with a boat rescue at Clarendon Road. Initially I was given varying stories and was unsure of what had occurred. There were multiple reports coming in from various sources and the information varied from 2 – 4 persons trapped in flood waters, and it was unsure if they had been in a boat or car. I eventually became aware that two men had been washed out of a boat after making

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contact with submerged power lines and were clinging to another power line in the fast flowing Lockyer Creek, in the vicinity of Pointings Bridge. An off duty fireman and a member of the public launched a canoe and rescued the men from the water but due to the raging waters were only able to transport them to the far bank. Initially SES launched a boat to rescue the men but it was deemed too dangerous due to the debris and submerged power lines in the water. The Westpac Rescue helicopter attended but was too low on fuel to assist. It was nearing dark. A second helicopter, from the NSW Rural Fire Service, attended and collected the men and took them to the Lowood High School. It was just on dark. The helicopter left for refuelling at Amberley.

29. One of the men, aged 68 years, had been electrocuted and had suffered a heart attack during the incident. The other man, aged in his late 40's had a dislocated shoulder and hypothermia. They both required urgent medical attention, in particular the 68 year old whose condition had worsened. QAS officers treating the two men told me they could not get through to their Communications Centre and asked that I try and get a helicopter to take the 68 year old male to hospital. It was suggested that if he did not get to hospital soon he would most likely die. I tried to organise another helicopter through the LDMG which was set up in the SES building. It was dark by this stage. I was told at this time that none of the helicopters could fly at night. I called Ipswich Communications on the car radio and advised them that I had an elderly gentleman critically ill and QAS had requested an urgent aerial evacuation. I asked Ipswich Communications to contact the ADF to see what they could arrange. I passed the information onto the QAS staff and returned to the Lowood Police Station. I briefed the OIC and went home at about 8.00 pm. I later learnt that QAS staff managed to evacuate the male person by road. This is discussed further at paragraph 49.

30. I returned to the Lowood Police Station at 3.00am on 12 January 2011. I was given a list of job cards relating to people that needed to be evacuated from the Lowood area. I spent the next two hours with Constable GRIFFIN working out a plan to collect the residents. I made a list of the more urgently required evacuations that needed to occur. After 5.00am EMQ Rescue 510 landed and I got on board. My role was to use my local knowledge of the area to direct the helicopter to locations so we could commence collecting people. Over the next few hours we evacuated 10 people from various locations and took them back to the evacuation centre at Lowood High School. We then patrolled the area looking for further persons who needed assistance and to get an appreciation of the area. The helicopter returned me to Lowood Police Station so that it could proceed to Amberley for refuelling. They advised me they would return to collect me.

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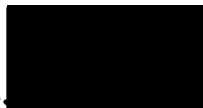
31. At the same time, Constable CARTER was in the Westpac Rescue helicopter performing a similar role to me. The only contact we had with each other was via the helicopter radios. We had no contact with Lowood Police Station at this time. The only way the helicopter could make contact with Lowood Police was via mobile phone. Constable CARTER and I were dropped back to Lowood Police Station at around the same time. We compared notes and formed a plan of attack for when our respective helicopters returned to collect us. Constable CARTER returned to the air while I was still at the Police Station.
32. I learnt that there was an elderly man at Mahon's Road who was waiting for collection as a result of a medical emergency. All mobile telephone communications at this point had stopped working. The EMQ chopper was diverted, and left a message for me to call them should they be required further. I did not receive the message for 2.5 hours. I was unaware they were not returning for me so I remained at the Police station and waited for them. I had a mobile number to ring to speak to an EMQ staff member who was coordinating the helicopters but I tried several times to call her and could not get through.
33. I then had a conversation with a Channel 10 employee who attended the Police Station. We used Police Station land line telephones so that he could arrange for authorisation of the use of a Channel 10 helicopter from Grantham. The helicopter arrived 15 minutes later and we went out to the house at Mahon's Road and located the male. The Channel Ten helicopter was then able to contact the Westpac Helicopter which then attended and winched the male to safety. After an aerial patrol of the area I returned to the Police Station. Constable CARTER returned to the station at around the same time.
34. About 12.00 pm Constable CARTER and I were tasked to manage the scene where a dead body had been recovered from flood waters and had been brought ashore near the intersection of Brightview Road and Foresthill-Fernvale Road Lowood.
35. During this time I became aware that in addition to the loss of mobile communications, the Lowood Police Station was now also without land lines, power or computers. Mobile phones were working intermittently but most of the time a message would appear stating something similar to "Network Busy".
36. I was stood down at 4.00 pm so I could get some sleep. I returned to work that night at 10.00 pm. During the night I was tasked to various jobs and at about 2.00 am I got about

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2 hours broken sleep in a swag at the Police Station while another crew from Yamanto was tasked to our area to conduct patrols.

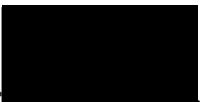
37. About 4.00 am on Thursday 13/1/2011 I was woken and advised that EMQ Rescue Helicopter 500 was attending at 5.00 am to collect me to conduct aerial patrols. Senior Constable STEELE of the QPS Academy had attended our station to see how she could assist as she could not get to her usual work place. S/C STEELE joined me in the helicopter and we conducted aerial patrols of Wivenhoe Pocket and Patrick Estate. We saw several people trapped on high ground at Patrick Estate Road. The area was largely out of the water but was cut off in every direction. We were concerned about how much food, water, and power the residents of that area had, as well as health and medical concerns.
38. The helicopter landed at that location. S/C STEELE and I stayed on the ground and EMQ 500 took four residents to the evacuation centre at Lowood. A local resident, Clay COLLESS, offered to assist. I also procured the keys to a car that was parked nearby from one of the women being evacuated. S/C STEELE took the car and began checking all residences to the north of our location. Clay COLLESS and I drove south and with his help I ascertained which houses were occupied and which residents had left the area. We discovered an elderly lady and her nephew who had been trapped in the house and we evacuated them back to the helicopter landing area. I learnt that all residents that were staying in the area had enough food, water, and power to remain, and the few that did not were taken out of the area by EMQ 500. I believe we evacuated about 8 people from that location.
39. EMQ 500 returned and collected S/C STEELE and me. We conducted further aerial patrols and looked for other persons trapped and inspected many vehicles that had been washed away. We found no one else that needed our immediate help and returned to our station.
40. S/C STEELE and I became aware that there was a baby at the Lowood Evacuation Centre that required medication. At this time mobile phone coverage was intermittent and we still had no land line phones or computers available at the Police Station. We were unable to contact any of the pharmacies in the area. S/C STEELE and I proceeded by Police vehicle to Fernvale to make contact with the pharmacy there.

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41. Due to the road conditions we had to make our way via Glamorgan Vale. The road was in poor condition and it took us some time. The pharmacy was unable to help with the medication we needed. There were numerous attempts made at Fernvale to contact other pharmacies in the area to find out if the medication was available. Due to power outages, none of the phones were working and a mobile phone was used. Due to the problems with mobile coverage, it took numerous attempts to get through to each pharmacy to make our enquiries. It took us about an hour to make those enquiries. We returned to Lowood at about 12.00pm unable to find any medication. We were both then stood down.
42. That afternoon I returned to work at about 4.00 pm after about 3 hours sleep. That night I worked with Constable DUNNE. Our tasks mainly involved patrols to observe water levels over various roads and welfare checks to follow up on jobs from earlier in the week that we had not been able to get to. We stood down at midnight and went home.
43. By Friday morning we were back to some form of normality and resumed normal roster. I was rostered to work from 10.00 am to 6.00 pm. I mainly tended to normal taskings as well as arranging food drops to the Lowood Evacuation Centre and other flood related tasks.
44. At some points all communications were down in the Lowood Division, with all computers and phones not working except for a handful of personal mobile phones and one of the police vehicles telephones.
45. Out of the three evacuations centres that had been originally set up, only the one at the Lowood High School was open. The evacuation sites at Tarampa School and Lowood CWA were not used which caused some problems as evacuees went to them and found that no person was there. This needs to be addressed in the future. It was later reported to me, by Lindsay STENZEL of 9 Stone Gully Road COOLANA, that he had evacuated his family at about 1.00 am on Tuesday 11/1/2011 due to his fears of rising water from the nearby Plain Creek. He and his family went to the Tarampa State School where he believed there was an evacuation centre. On finding that there was no-one there, he continued to the Lowood High School. On talking to an SES member there, he was advised to return home as it was believed that he would be fine at his house. By 8.00am his house was being flooded and two QFRS officer and I had to put ourselves at risk to rescue him and his family.

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46. The communications within the Lowood area have been a problem for the QPS since I have been at that station. At Lowood Station we have no difficulty getting reception but once we leave the station our handsets are nearly useless and usually only capable of receiving. That is not even possible in some areas. The car radios are not much better with numerous areas in the division where we can hear transmissions but can not be heard by anyone else. The vehicle radios are very limited in the entire Fernvale area, the area between Fernvale and Lowood along Foresthill-Fernvale Road, parts of Coominya, and Eagle Rise Estate, to name a few. Often officers have to use mobile telephones. Mobile coverage in Fernvale is poor at the best of times. The other police vehicle was lost in flood waters on the night of the Tuesday 11/1/2011 and I am not sure if the mobile phone from that vehicle was salvaged or lost at that time. The replacement vehicle we got for the duration of the flood period was not equipped with a vehicle phone kit and that meant many officers relied on their own personal mobile phones to communicate when possible, depending on network availability.
47. There appeared to be limited communications between agencies at a local level during the flood events. We had kept many of our contact numbers on a white board in the station. Many of these telephone numbers were mobile telephone numbers and once the network went down we had no contact with anyone. To overcome this we had to get in vehicles and drive to other areas to make contact at some times. This was not possible at all times due to the roads being cut due to the flood waters. Once the land line phones and power were lost we could not contact anyone for the most part.
48. Many of the emergency agencies operate on their own communication systems and once technology was affected many of the emergency agencies could not communicate. This made tasking of resources considerably difficult.
49. The use of the helicopters after dark was also a major point of concern for me. On Tuesday 11/1/2011 a situation arose where two medical emergency patients could not be evacuated due to a lack of helicopters with night vision capabilities. These evacuations did not require extraction from a dangerous location, merely collection from the Lowood High School oval where QAS staff had stabilised the patients. I was advised this was not possible due to none of the rescue helicopters deployed having any night vision capabilities. To overcome this, two QAS officers placed the two men in a Toyota Landcruiser 4WD ambulance and drove out of Lowood through Minden. This was extremely dangerous and from all reports was very risky but they had very little choice or the 68 year old male patient would have most likely died. It has been reported to me that

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on the way they experienced severe flooding and landslides and the journey took about 2 hours instead of the usual 20 – 30 minutes by ambulance. The males were taken to the Ipswich General Hospital where they received some treatment, the 68 year old male spending the next five days in Intensive Care.

50. I had worked in Lowood since August 2010 but had lived in the area since March of that year. I had not witnessed any serious flooding in the area since early 2009 when flood waters flowed from the area near Tallegalla and flowed into Jensen Swamp and paddocks near Brightview. On the days leading up to Monday 10/1/2011 I had been on rostered days off from Thursday 6/1/2011 until Sunday 9/1/2011, inclusive. I do not recall what I had been doing in that time off. Presumably I was at home with my family. My wife works week days and I usually keep my young son home from day care on my days off during the week. As a family we do not watch a lot of television and rarely listen to the radio. In the weeks prior to that, there had been periods of heavy rain and I had on occasion attended incidents of minor flooding. These incidents included roads such as Lowood Minden Road, Glamorgan Vale Road, and Brisbane Valley Hwy FERNVALE, in the vicinity of the service station and State School, having some amount of water covering the roadways. None of these incidents were of great significance and only resulted in short term, temporary inconvenience to road users. I do not recall any reports of serious property damage as a result of flooding in the area in the weeks prior to 10/1/2011.

51. On Monday 10/1/2011 I spent the morning at home alone. It had rained in the morning but I do not believe it was raining later in the day. I left home to go to work at about 3.30 pm. I am not sure if I had seen television footage of flooding in Toowoomba at that time or if it was later, but I know that when I did see that footage for the first time I did not equate that to something that would affect Lowood. I had not heard of the flooding at Grantham or Murphy's Creek at this time. When I commenced my shift at 4.00 pm I received no warnings of approaching flood waters. The only out of the ordinary information I received was that the level of the Brisbane River was up and had gone over the Brisbane Valley Highway at Fernvale. I attributed this to water releases from Wivenhoe Dam as the water level had gone up and down for weeks depending on water release levels.

52. I would have thought that due to the nature of the flood event upstream that I would have been advised of the need to take some action regarding rising floodwater when I commenced my shift. The first indication I had of serious flooding in our Division was

when I was tasked to 70 Schimkes Lane CLARENDON and the subsequent telephone conversations I had with a Senior Sergeant from an MIR. That occurred at about 6.30 – 7.00pm that night. I have since learnt that there were reports of flooding in our Division as early as 9.30 am with a request for helicopter evacuation being recorded at 5.09 pm while I was on duty as the senior officer in our Division, I was not made aware of this incident at the time. There was no indication that this was any different to any other day at work.



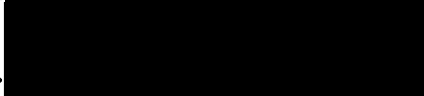
D RUMBELOW

Justices Act Acknowledgement

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(6C)(c)(i)&(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (i) This written statement by me dated date and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 14 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (ii) 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.

..........Signature

Signed at Lowood this 19th day of April 2011.

Witness Signature..  Signature of officer

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