

Contents

Preface	30
1 Introduction	32
1.1 Report to government	32
1.2 The Commission of Inquiry	33
1.3 The Commission's work	33
1.4 Structure of this report	36
1.5 General observations	37
2 Floodplain management	38
2.1 Principles of floodplain management	40
2.2 Flood studies	40
2.3 A flood study of the Brisbane River catchment	41
2.3.1 The expert panel.....	41
2.3.2 A comprehensive study of the Brisbane River catchment.....	42
2.3.3 Responsibility for completing the study	46
2.3.4 Further investigations required for Ipswich	47
2.3.5 Effect of the need for a comprehensive flood study on current planning.....	48
2.4 Brisbane and Ipswich council procedures	48
2.4.1 The Brisbane Q100	48
2.4.2 The Ipswich Q100	52
2.5 The performance of flood studies in Queensland	54
2.5.1 Catchment wide flood studies	54
2.5.2 Who should be responsible for the performance of flood studies?	54
2.5.3 Ensuring all urban areas have flood studies.....	55
2.5.4 Commissioning, assessment and use of flood studies	56
2.5.5 Central repository of flood study data	58
2.6 Using flood studies in floodplain management	60
2.6.1 Preparing a floodplain management plan	60
2.6.2 Responsibility for floodplain management	60
2.6.3 Councils' floodplain management activities.....	61
2.7 Flood mapping for land planning controls	62
2.7.1 The absence of flood maps in Queensland.....	62
2.7.2 The effectiveness of flood maps in land planning.....	62
2.7.3 Assessment of mapping options.....	63
2.8 Use of flood information in emergency management.....	68
2.9 Distribution of flood information	69
2.9.1 Providing flood information and mapping to the public	69
2.9.2 Flood information for dealing with property.....	70
2.10 Guidelines for the preparation of flood studies and flood management plans	72

3 Planning framework	88
3.1 State planning instruments.....	88
3.1.1 Regional plans.....	88
3.1.2 State planning regulatory provisions.....	89
3.1.3 State planning policies	89
3.1.4 Standard planning scheme provisions.....	89
3.2 Local planning instruments	89
3.2.1 Planning schemes.....	89
3.2.2 Planning scheme policies.....	90
3.2.3 Temporary local planning instruments	91
3.3 Types of development and development assessment	91
3.3.1 Categories of development.....	91
3.3.2 Development assessment	92
3.3.3 Referral agencies.....	93
4 State planning instruments	96
4.1 State Planning Policy 1/03	96
4.1.1 The purpose and objectives of State Planning Policy 1/03	96
4.1.2 Application of State Planning Policy 1/03	97
4.1.3 Review of State Planning Policy 1/03.....	99
4.1.4 State interest review of planning schemes	99
4.1.5 The role of the Department of Local Government and Planning	101
4.1.6 The role of the Department of Community Safety	102
4.1.7 The role of DERM.....	102
4.1.8 Gaps identified.....	103
4.2 Temporary state planning policy	104
4.2.1 Mapping referred to in the temporary state planning policy	104
4.2.2 The Model Code provided by the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.....	104
4.2.3 Reflecting the Temporary State Planning Policy in planning schemes.....	105
4.3 Queensland Planning Provisions	106
4.3.1 History of the Queensland Planning Provisions	106
4.3.2 Structure of the Queensland Planning Provisions.....	106
4.4 Regional plans.....	109
4.4.1 Land use designations under the South East Queensland Regional Plan.....	109
5 Local planning instruments	118
5.1 Planning schemes.....	118
5.1.1 Model flood planning controls.....	119
5.1.2 Features of the model flood planning controls.....	120
5.2 Temporary local planning instruments.....	123
5.3 Planning scheme policies.....	125
5.4 Amending planning schemes.....	127
5.4.1 A shorter process?.....	127

5.5 Compensation.....	128
5.5.1 Statutory immunity	128
5.5.2 Reduction in land value	130
6 Satellite planning systems	138
6.1 <i>Urban Land Development Authority Act 2007</i>	138
6.2 <i>South Bank Corporation Act 1989</i>	139
6.3 <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>	139
6.3.1 State development areas	139
6.3.2 Significant projects.....	140
6.3.3 Prescribed projects	140
6.4 Consideration of flooding as part of satellite planning systems.....	141
6.4.1 Satellite planning systems generally	141
6.4.2 Significant projects under the <i>State Development and Public Works Organisation Act 1971</i>	142
7 Development and flood considerations.....	146
7.1 Residential uses	146
7.1.1 Existing residential uses.....	146
7.1.2 An acceptable level of risk for proposed residential uses	147
7.2 Community infrastructure	148
7.3 Commercial uses	151
7.4 Industrial uses and hazardous materials.....	153
7.4.1 Regulation	153
7.4.2 Planning schemes.....	157
7.5 River architecture	159
7.5.1 Brisbane’s river architecture.....	159
7.5.2 Regulation of river architecture as ‘prescribed tidal work’	159
7.5.3 New Farm Riverwalk	159
7.5.5 CityCat and CityFerry terminals.....	161
7.5.6 Private pontoons	161
7.5.7 Response to the floods.....	161
7.6 Placement of fill and development in a floodplain	162
7.6.1 Treatment of fill in State Planning Policy 1/03 and Guideline	165
7.6.2 Exemption where fill is carried out by a public sector entity	166
7.6.3 Examples of problems from fill associated with infrastructure	167
7.7 Levees.....	168
7.7.1 Levees in the 2010/2011 floods.....	168
7.7.2 Post-flood consideration of levees in urban areas	168
7.7.3 Controlling the construction of levees.....	169
7.7.4 Types of levees to be regulated.....	171
7.7.5 Process and criteria for approving the construction of a levee	172
7.8 Anthills: Properties isolated by flooding of low lying access routes	173
7.8.1 Current provisions in State Planning Policy 1/03	175

8 Development assessment in practice	190
8.1 Sources of flood information for use in development assessment	192
8.1.1 Flood information maintained by councils for use in development assessment	192
8.1.2 Site-specific flood information provided by an applicant	194
8.2 Assessing flood information in development applications	196
8.2.1 Ipswich City Council’s assessment process	197
8.2.2 Brisbane City Council’s assessment practices	197
8.2.3 Improving council assessment processes	198
8.2.4 Information requests	199
8.2.5 Problems in development assessment	199
8.3 Development conditions	200
8.3.1 Conditions going to acceptability of use	201
8.3.2 Standard conditions	202
8.3.3 Conditions which require flood evacuation plans	202
8.4 Communicating information about flood risk	203
9 Building controls	210
9.1 Minimum floor levels	210
9.2 Freeboard levels	210
9.3 Building materials and design	211
9.4 State versus local regulation	212
9.5 Proposed new part of the Queensland Development Code: ‘Construction of buildings in flood hazard areas’	212
9.5.1 Required flood information	213
9.5.2 Assessing building applications against the proposed new part	215
9.5.3 Early adoption of the proposed new part	216
10 Essential services	220
10.1 Sewage and sewerage	220
10.1.1 Definitions	220
10.1.2 The role of sewerage infrastructure	220
10.1.3 The regulatory structure applicable to sewerage infrastructure	221
10.1.4 The impact of the 2010/2011 floods on sewerage infrastructure	221
10.1.5 The location and design of public sewerage infrastructure	223
10.1.6 Electrical switchboards and generators	225
10.1.7 Prevention of sewage discharge	226
10.1.8 Illegal connections of stormwater to sewerage infrastructure	228
10.1.9 Interactions with disaster management groups	230
10.2 Stormwater	231
10.2.1 Overview of the stormwater network	231
10.2.2 The regulatory structure applicable to stormwater networks	232
10.2.3 The design and construction of stormwater networks	232
10.2.4 Basements	234
10.2.5 The maintenance and optimisation of stormwater systems	236
10.2.6 Backflow flooding	237

10.3 Electrical infrastructure	239
10.3.1 The electricity supply industry in Queensland.....	239
10.3.2 The impact of the 2010/2011 floods on distribution infrastructure.....	240
10.3.3 Shared network infrastructure.....	241
10.3.4 Customer dedicated assets.....	246
10.3.5 Conduits for electrical cables.....	248
10.4 Telecommunications infrastructure	249
10.4.1 The locating of telecommunications infrastructure.....	249
10.4.2 The design and protection of telecommunications infrastructure.....	251
10.5 Roads and rail	252
10.5.1 Roads.....	252
10.5.2 Rail.....	254
11 Buy-backs and land swaps	272
11.1 Property buy-backs	272
11.1.1 Benefits and limitations.....	272
11.1.2 Current arrangements	273
11.1.3 Council buy-back programs	273
11.1.4 Future considerations.....	274
11.2 Rebuilding Grantham	275
11.2.1 Land swap program.....	276
11.2.2 Grantham Development Scheme	276
11.2.3 Suitability of the Grantham response for other areas	277
12 Performance of private insurers	282
12.1 Other reviews	282
12.2 Insurers' claims responsibilities	284
12.2.1 Terms of the policy and the general law of insurance	284
12.2.2 The <i>Insurance Contracts Act 1984</i>	285
12.2.3 General Insurance Code of Practice.....	285
12.2.4 Topics of investigation for the Commission.....	286
12.3 Process of investigation	286
12.3.1 Co-operation of insurers	287
12.3.2 Insurance statistics	288
12.3.3 The body of evidence	289
12.4 The picture as a whole	289
12.4.1 The number of claims	289
12.4.2 Accepted versus declined claims	290
12.4.3 Disputed claims	292
12.5 Timeliness	294
12.5.1 Determination of liability	294
12.5.2 Finalisation of accepted claims: settlement, replacement and repairs	298
12.5.3 Timeliness of internal dispute resolution	300
12.6 Communication with policy-holders	302
12.6.1 Multiple case managers	303
12.6.2 File notes and recording calls.....	303
12.7 Assessment process	304
12.7.1 Area hydrology reports.....	304

12.7.2 Site-specific hydrology reports.....	306
12.7.3 Loss assessors' reports	307
12.7.4 CGU's desktop assessment process	309
12.7.5 RACQ Insurance Limited.....	319
12.8 Information to policy-holders whose claims were denied.....	321
12.8.1 Provision of reasons.....	321
12.8.2 Provision of information	323
12.9 Internal dispute resolution	324
13 Mining.....	350
13.1 Preparation for the 2010/2011 wet season	352
13.1.1 Response to Bureau of Meteorology seasonal forecast.....	352
13.1.2 Pre-wet season inspections.....	353
13.2 Flooding at mine sites	354
13.3 Effects of mine discharges.....	356
13.4 Environmental authorities.....	357
13.4.1 The legislative regime	357
13.4.2 The Fitzroy model conditions.....	357
13.4.3 The effect of the model conditions on water storage on site.....	358
13.4.4 The industry pushes for amendments.....	359
13.4.5 Performance of environmental authorities in the 2010/2011 wet season	359
13.4.6 Changes in the wake of the flood	359
13.5 Transitional environmental programs	361
13.5.1 DERM's approach to granting transitional environmental programs in the 2010/2011 wet season	362
13.5.2 The need for timely approvals	362
13.5.3 Consistency of decision-making.....	363
13.5.4 A proper use of transitional environmental programs?	365
13.5.5 Adequacy of DERM's response to flooding	366
13.6 A third way – emergency directions?	367
13.6.1 The Moranbah North emergency direction	367
13.6.2 Definition of emergency	368
13.6.3 Procedural guide	368
13.6.4 Verbal approvals	368
13.7 Maintaining the experience gained in 2010/2011.....	369
13.8 Abandoned mines.....	369
13.8.1 Effect of flooding on abandoned mines	369
13.8.2 The abandoned mine land program.....	371
13.8.3 Mt Oxide mine (abandoned)	371
13.8.4 Taking responsibility for abandoned mines.....	372
13.8.5 Steps in the management of abandoned mines	372
14 Flood-related deaths	386
14.1 The Commission's review of systemic issues.....	386
14.2 The circumstances of 2010/2011 flood-related deaths	386
14.2.1 Deaths during activities in flooded waterways	387
14.2.2 Deaths of people in vehicles on flooded roads and crossings.....	387
14.2.3 The deaths in flash flooding in Toowoomba on 10 January 2011	389

14.2.4 The deaths in the Lockyer Valley region on 10 January 2011	390
14.2.5 Death of a child during a rescue attempt on 11 January 2011	392
15 Emergency response and other interim report issues.....	394
15.1 Evacuation plans for commercial premises.....	394
15.2 Emergency communications.....	397
15.2.1 Interoperability	397
15.2.2 Radio communications ‘black spots’.....	399
15.3 Review of disaster management plans.....	400
15.3.1 The review process	400
15.3.2 Assessment of the review process	401
15.4 Queensland Fire and Rescue Service.....	402
15.4.1 Preparedness for and response to the events of 10 January 2011.....	402
15.4.2 Response of fire service management and deployments on 10 January.....	402
15.4.3 Chain of command.....	405
15.4.4 Weather forecasts and warnings.....	406
15.4.5 Risk assessments.....	406
15.5 State Emergency Service (SES)	407
15.5.1 SES command and control.....	407
15.5.2 Funding	415
15.5.3 RFA Online	417
15.5.4 Training	417
15.5.5 Shared responsibility	418
15.6 State Emergency Service in Grantham.....	418
15.7 The Grantham quarry.....	419
16 Operation of Wivenhoe and Somerset dams	436
16.1 Overview.....	438
16.2 The flood mitigation manual for Wivenhoe Dam and Somerset Dam.....	442
16.3 The manual requires a choice of strategy	443
16.3.1 Objectives and procedures.....	443
16.3.2 The role of the flood engineers	444
16.3.3 Selection of flood operations strategies	445
16.3.4 Move to strategy W3 mandated by the manual	447
16.3.5 Does the manual require that an engineer be conscious of the strategy in which he is operating?	450
16.4 The flood engineers’ evidence as to the manual’s requirements for adoption of strategies generally	451
16.5 The March flood event report: a record of strategy choice.....	452
16.5.1 The executive summary.....	453
16.5.2 Express statements as to strategy selection	453
16.6 Evidence of strategy choice: the flood operations engineers	457
16.6.1 Mr Ruffini	457
16.6.2 Mr Ayre	459
16.6.3 Mr Tibaldi	462
16.6.4 Mr Malone	462
16.7 Objective evidence as to strategy choice on 8 and 9 January 2011	463
16.7.1 Documents from which no inference as to strategy can be drawn.....	464

16.7.2 Situation report at 5.53 pm on 8 January 2011.....	474
16.7.3 Flood event log, 3.30 pm, 9 January	478
16.7.4 Situation Report at 9.04 pm, telephone conference at 9.30 pm, and emails from Mr Spiller at 11.07 pm on 9 January 2011.....	482
16.7.5 Mr Drury’s email to Mr Spiller on the morning of 10 January 2011	482
16.7.6 Teleconference at 8.30 am on 10 January 2011	483
16.7.7 Mr Allen’s email to Mr Cooper at 10.57am on 12 January 2011.....	484
16.7.8 Conclusion on contemporaneous documents.....	485
16.8 The first attempts to record strategy choice	485
16.8.1 Mr Malone’s Summary of Manual document.....	485
16.8.2 Strategy Summary Log.....	487
16.8.3 The brief for the Minister.....	491
16.8.4 Conclusions from Summary of Manual, Strategy Summary Log and the brief for the Minister ..	495
16.8.5 Another record - Mr Ayre’s gate operations spreadsheet comments.....	495
16.9 Another record: Mr Cooper’s report	496
16.10 The March 2011 flood event report.....	497
16.10.1 The role of the flood engineers	497
16.10.2 Mr Tibaldi’s methodology.....	498
16.10.3 Other flood engineers’ involvement in and adoption of sections 2 and 10.....	501
16.11 Conclusions: the dam operations strategies	503
16.11.1 The strategies used	503
16.11.2 The engineers’ states of mind about strategy changes.....	504
16.11.3 Engineers’ states of mind	505
16.11.4 Knowledge of each other’s actions and state of mind.....	507
16.11.5 Referral to the Crime and Misconduct Commission	509
16.11.6 Seqwater’s systems and procedures for the creation of the flood event report	509
16.12 Knowledge of government officials about the March flood event report.....	511
16.12.1 Peter Allen, Director, Dam Safety	511
16.12.2 Knowledge of Seqwater management.....	513
16.12.3 Knowledge of the Premier, the responsible Minister and the Directors-General.....	514
16.12.4 Knowledge of officers of the SEQ Water Grid Manager	517
16.13 Peer reviews of the March report	519
16.14 The effect of releases from Wivenhoe Dam on flooding in the Brisbane River	521
16.14.1 Modelling work done for the Commission.....	522
16.14.2 The effect of the operation of Wivenhoe Dam in January 2011.....	522
16.14.3 Effects of different release strategies.....	524
17 Other dam issues.....	560
17.1 Longer term review of the Wivenhoe and North Pine manuals.....	561
17.1.1 The structure for the completion of the scientific investigations	561
17.1.2 Consideration of options for operating strategies by government	563
17.1.3 Creation of the new manuals.....	564
17.1.4 A further consideration for the longer term review of the North Pine manual.....	569
17.2 Review and approval of flood mitigation manuals	570
17.2.1 Identity of approver	570
17.2.2 Independence of assessor.....	570
17.2.3 Work procedure	571
17.3 Review of flood event reports	572

17.4 Bank slumping	574
17.4.1 Riverbank erosion and slumping in January 2011	574
17.4.2 The causes of riverbank erosion and slumping.....	575
17.4.3 Slumping in the upper-Brisbane River	576
17.4.4 Slumping in mid-Brisbane River	577
17.4.5 Riverbank slumping and dam operation strategies.....	578
17.5 Wivenhoe Power Station	579
17.5.1 Splityard Creek Dam	579
17.5.2 Interaction between Splityard Creek Dam and Wivenhoe Dam	579
17.5.3 Wivenhoe Power Station during the January 2011 flooding.....	580
17.5.4 Communication about releases	581
17.5.5 Flood emergency planning.....	582
17.5.6 Condition of Splityard Creek Dam	583
17.5.7 Control of Splityard Creek Dam operations during flooding.....	583
17.6 Somerset Dam cracks	584
17.6.1 Investigating the cracks	585
17.6.2 Monitoring the cracking	586
17.6.3 Impact of the cracking on the operation of Somerset Dam during floods.....	587
17.7 Bridges and crossings near Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams.....	588
17.7.1 Crossings downstream of Wivenhoe, Somerset and North Pine dams	588
17.7.2 Upgrading bridges and influence on dam operations.....	589
17.7.3 Communication of bridge closures.....	590
17.8 Lenthalls Dam.....	591
17.8.1 Installation and design of the crest gates.....	591
17.8.2 Chronology of floods since installation of the gates	592
17.8.3 Observed problems and solutions implemented	594
17.8.4 Current status of gate operability	595
17.8.5 Dam safety implications.....	596
17.8.6 Preparing for wet seasons	596
17.9 Detention basins in Toowoomba city.....	597
17.9.1 Flood mitigation actions by Toowoomba Regional Council	597
17.9.2 DERM's dam safety and failure impact assessment.....	598
17.10 Other DERM dam functions	599
17.10.1 Response to Bureau of Meteorology forecast	599
17.10.2 Review and approval of emergency action plans.....	600
17.10.3 Dam safety audits	602
17.10.4 Interaction between DERM and disaster management personnel.....	603
17.10.5 Management of non-commercial water assets.....	603
17.10.6 A broader flood mitigation responsibility?.....	604
Appendices.....	622
Appendix 1: Terms of Reference.....	623
Appendix 2: Leave to appear.....	628
Appendix 3: <i>Interim Report recommendations</i>	630
Appendix 4: List of staff at the Commission.....	643
Appendix 5: List of experts engaged by the Commission.....	644
Appendix 6: Glossary	645

