

QFCI

Date:

12/10/11

Jm

Exhibit Number:

780

Name of Witness	John Andrew KENNEDY
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]
Address and contact details	[REDACTED] Ferry street, Maryborough
Occupation	Caravan Park Business Owner / Operator
Officer taking statement	Detective Sergeant Paul BROWNE
Date taken	30/08/2011

John Andrew KENNEDY states;

1. I am a single man, [REDACTED] years of age and currently reside at the above address.
2. I own and run the Wallace Motel and Caravan Park in Ferry street, Maryborough. We have owned and run this site since 2005. The property is bordered by the Mary River and is approximately 10 acres in size, with entrances off Ferry and Hyne streets. We have 30 cabins, 10 motel units and 55 caravan sites. A few of those cabins and van sites are permanent residents.
3. In the time we have been here we have not experienced any flood events. In preparation for the pending flood and cyclone season/s we have our own evacuation plan. This was developed after we took over and because we saw a need for it as we began to rely more on staff.
4. Apart from my own business I have not been involved in disaster management or had a role with Council or the S.E.S.

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5. Our business premises were initially impacted by a minor flood on or around the 28th December 2010. It was at that time we realised that there were no disaster management plans, only disaster recovery plans in place for our local area. It was frightening to realise this as the words “prevention” and “warning” were not part of the local planning and there had been no preparation at all in our local area.
6. When the January flood came I remember we sat through a major rain event and were watching the river levels, but at that stage there were only very little rises if any and no indication of a pending major flood. At 11pm the river levels were fine but by 2am flooding had started and waters were rising very quickly.
7. We commenced our evacuations at 4.30am and continued through until 11.30pm. This was done of our own accord and the decision made by us as we did not receive any warnings at all or advice from anybody about evacuation.
8. We did not receive any assistance from government or other local agencies in the preparation or response stages of the flood and I do not believe that the community was adequately prepared for what happened in January 2011.
9. As part of our preparation for the flood and cyclone season we had already moved as much material from the ground level as was possible. We had also pumped up all the tyres on the cabins and moveable vans

and revised our own evacuation plan. This made it a lot easier to evacuate when the time came.

10.The evacuation itself consisted of moving all of the cabins and every single asset we had in the park to higher ground, with the exception of light poles, amenities blocks and on-suite buildings, which cannot be moved. We also had to plug sewerage outlets and make sure that all of the lines were covered as best we could. It was also necessary to remove on-site power poles and cover those to make sure water could not get into them.

11.The cabins and vans need to be towed out by either tractor or 4WD, depending on the weight. We did most of this evacuation ourselves with help from family, staff and a few of our neighbours.

12.Our evacuation plan involves storing the vans in the car-park of the Hotel across the road. That worked well and the residents who we still needed to accommodate were able to come back across the road and use the amenity block in the higher area of the park. Other residents and tourists who were staying with us at the time and who could not move we had to try and squeeze into our own motel units. We made arrangements with other Motels for those who could not evacuate and we could not fit in.

13.The cabins were towed and stored in the streets on higher ground which surround the park. We got a lot of help from the locals with guarding and keeping an eye out for them while they were stored there.

14. After the flood had passed and the water began to recede (36-48 hours) we were able to start the clean-up and recovery process. Initially there was no response to us, until the Firefighters arrived and began to help with the clean-up. They were really good at getting their hoses out and helping to wash all of the mud away and down the slope towards the River. I was very appreciative of the help provided by the fire fighters and volunteers in the wash down.

15. Apart from Firefighters, the clean-up was again mostly us, with some assistance from local businesses (Bunning's and Red Rooster). The Council also paid for a Contractor to chop up a tree for us. In regards to resources it was mostly the Fire trucks, their operators and volunteers. There was no co-ordination of clean-up or recovery in our local area.

16. A lot of staff from Council came around and were handing out their business cards and telling us they were a Manager, but they never actually seemed to go any further than that and nothing seemed to be getting managed. The help with the tree was only after the Lord Mayor had been to have a look and visit.

17. The steps taken to maintain communication, electricity and water in our area was good and we maintained those services throughout the flood event.

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18. One thing was not good was the number of rubber neckers, including a number of media organisations. Things were so bad that we were trying to evacuate and people were setting up in the middle of our two driveways making it hard to get past. We had asked the Police for some assistance but they had refused on legal grounds. Eventually on Saturday the S.E.S. were at our front driveway to prevent on-lookers from entering the flood waters on Ferry street.

19. As far as information being provided to the community about road closures, evacuation points, water storage, food or medical supplies there were none. The recovery process could have also been better if the co-ordination had been better. An example of this was some Wide Bay Water Resources staff who just sat and watched, rather than using their resources to help.

20. There were lots of meetings with different Federal, State and Local Government bodies and these were good because they allowed locals to get together. Through one of those meetings we also received some funding. I think it was through "DEEDI" who were very good at explaining the process and putting people at ease and not worrying because there was funding available.

21. I was also contacted by the Council and "DERM" after the flood but mostly that was to invite us to more meetings. It ended up being the same businesses that were attending the meetings and it came to a point

where I was too busy trying to get my business back running to go to meetings.

22. The Centrelink and Taxation offices were also excellent after the flood and the staff were really good at providing support and reducing the stress levels on businesses and the general community.

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[Redacted]

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[Redacted]

25. After the minor December 2010 flood, we did not have any flooding ourselves but the road was closed and we suffered a loss of business because of that.

[Redacted]

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28. My business is Zoned Special Purpose - Tourism, consistent with the operation of a Tourist Park. The flooding that occurred at my business arose after water broke the banks of the Mary River and continued to rise. This years flood was different to previous floods with respect to the speed of inundation. Previous floods have taken 2-3 days to inundate, however the January 2011 flood took a matter of hours.

29. on purchasing this business 6 years ago I was aware that the property was subject to flooding. I was verbally told this and also obtained flooding maps from the Council.

Recommendations:

30. In the event of a future incident I believe the most appropriate way to warn people would be via telephone call or "SMS" message to a mobile phone, not necessarily a business phone.

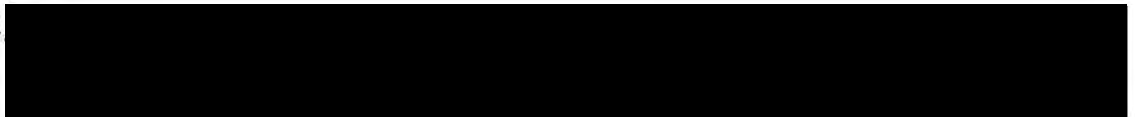
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31. Better river height recording processes, suggestion of a back-up plan for example allowing farmers situated along the river to telephone a central contact point if river levels are rising rapidly. This central contact point could then issue "SMS" or telephone warnings down river.

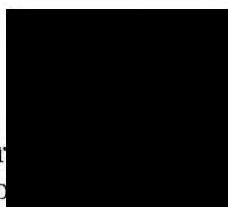
32. I also think that there needs to be clear definitions of responsibility and routine updates on road closures and openings.

33. Information also needs to be available and we need to identify who has the responsibility for and providing better predictive modelling on floods. Once that is available the updated information needs to be more easily accessible as the data was only being updated at 3 hourly intervals and that was not enough, because the water was rising so quickly.

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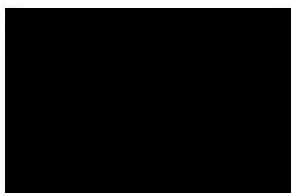


35. Prevention is better than cure, so disaster management protocols should be amended to include prevention and communication rather than waiting for the disaster to occur before triggering actions from the various agencies (Council, Police, S.E.S., Fire, Water board, Ergon etc).



I am able to produce a copy of the Flood Management Plan and a series of photographs, depicting the park during the flood and after.

Exhibit number



John Andrew KENNEDY.

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 30th August 2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 9 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.

.....Signature

Signed atMaryborough.....this.....30th.....day of.....August.....2011

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12. CONTINGENCY PLANS

12.a. Flood

The lower portion of the park is susceptible to flooding during a 1 in 10 year episode with infiltration from the Mary River & Ullulah Lagoon upstream. Due to the width and length of the river, the increase in the level of the floodwaters allows for a 2 to 3 day warning of the imminent episode and thus the evacuation of guests, onsite caravans and cabins.

The following is an overview of tasks required to minimise flood damage to park owned assets.

- Arrange heavy load towing vehicle (tractor, bobcat, truck etc). JJ Byrne & Son earthmoving have a large backhoe. A tow ball can be welded to the front hydraulic mechanism for towing with the added feature that it can be raised or lowered as necessary when going up the steep incline to Hyne Street or Ferry St. **JJ Byrne & Son** - Ph: [REDACTED]
[REDACTED] As an alternative and if the task appears too large for the resources immediately at hand, the local radio stations may be contacted for help. In the past, stations have broadcast for help and the city of Maryborough responds accordingly. The main criteria would be for powerful towing vehicles. SeaFM, 101.9 – Ph: [REDACTED]
- Advise tourists and residents; asking residents to commence pack-ups.
- Contact electrician and arrange disconnection of power and removal of power heads from cabin and caravan sites.
- **Family Cabins 72-75**
 - Ensure tyres are pumped up.
 - Disconnect & relocate gas bottles to top shed.
 - Remove excess furniture (TV, Beds, Dining table & chairs etc)
 - Disconnect chains holding cabins to slab.
 - Disconnect water and grey water pipes.
 - Raise cabin and remove besser blocks.
 - Connect Jockey wheel to tow bar (stored in lower shed)
 - Connect tow bars and move cabins to Hyne street (or higher).
 - Ensure power heads are removed and power is disconnected.
 - Cover septic pipe with a cap to prevent blocking.
- **New Cabins 56-63**
 - Ensure tyres are pumped up.
 - Disconnect chain “tie-downs”, raise cabin and remove stabilisation blocks.

- Connect Jockey wheel to tow bar (stored in lower shed)
- Disconnect water and grey-water pipes.
- Raise cabin and remove besser blocks.
- Connect tow bars and move to higher ground.
- Ensure power heads are removed and power is disconnected.
- Cover septic pipe with a cap to prevent blocking.

▪ **Cabins 64 & 65**

- Same procedure as above.
- Remember to remove "S" bend from the bottom of the kitchen sink in order to raise the pipes above the rubber collar.

▪ **Economy Cabins**

- Cut down branches blocking cabin 12.
- Remove all power, water and greywater connections.
- Remove any furniture from annexes if applicable
- Remove poles from annexes and throw annexe fabric over cabin.
- Ensure tyres are pumped up and in working order.
- Remove chain "tie-downs" and stabilisation blocks.
- Connect Jockey wheel to tow bar (stored in lower shed)
- Connect tow bars and move to higher ground.

▪ **On-Site Vans**

- Ensure tyres are pumped up and in working order.
- Ensure annexes have been cleared out.
- Remove annexes (throw over caravan if short for time).
- Connect Jockey wheel to tow bar (stored in lower shed)
- Remove mains water and greywater connections.
- Remove Television aerials (if necessary)
- Remove stabilisation blocks.
- Tow to higher ground

- **Lower amenities**
 - Remove hot water system from rear wall and plug water pipes.
 - Remove Washing Machines, Dryers and Telephone from laundry.
 - Remove entrance doors (to allow flood water to flow rather than dam).

- **Ensuites for sites 80-83**
 - Remove hot water systems from rear walls and plug water pipes.
 - Remove entrance doors (to allow flood water to flow rather than dam).
 - Cover or remove electrical components or outlets.

- **Remove Lower wire fence** (roll up wire mesh but leave poles)

- **Fence on Ferry Street.**
 - Remove all bolts from the top of each fence section and lay fence over in direction of flood water flow (most likely SW).
 - If total fence panel removal is required, ensure they are easily numbered for simple matching when they are later re-installed.

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- Remove all valuable or buoyant material from storage shed near sewerage pump station.

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- Arrange Emergency power back-up (generator hire or such).



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