



Our Ref: RLH/ Floods

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The Commissioner
Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry
PO Box 1738
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Dear Commissioner

Submissions Concerning Further Questions for Mark Babister

We refer to your letter dated 3 August 2011.

We enclose written questions and submissions on behalf of the Fernvale and Surrounding Communities Action Group.

We look forward to your consideration of the matters raised.

Yours faithfully

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Fernvale Residents' Submissions Concerning Further Questions for Mark Babister

Earlier transition to W4

1. At paragraph 66 of Mark Babister's report of 28 July 2011, "Option A" is stated as follows:

"This scenario involves an earlier transition to Strategy W4 for the Wivenhoe Dam releases, at 4 pm 10 January instead of 8 am 11 January as actually occurred (16 hours earlier). This corresponds to the first prediction of a Wivenhoe Dam level exceeding 74.0ms AHD, based on modelling using the scaled up forecast rain (Run at 28, Appendix A, Reference 7)."

2. In contrast in its interim report, Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry ("the Commission") found that at p.55:

"At 8.00 pm on 9 January, for the first time, the model's 'with forecast' prediction suggested that the level of the lake would exceed 74.0 metres, the tipping point for the purposes of Strategy W4."

3. The Commission's finding reflects the potential for entry into the W4 strategy some 36 hours before that strategy was actually invoked, rather than only 16 hours.
4. The Fernvale Residents submit that Mr Babister should be asked to address the Commission's question having regard to the Commission's finding.
5. The relevant question is:

What effect would the implementation of the W4 Strategy at 8 pm on 9 January 2011 have had on flooding?

Flooding in Fernvale

6. By letter dated 22 March 2011 from the Commission, a number of residents of Fernvale were granted leave to appear. The grant of leave was on the basis that these residents are particularly vulnerable to releases from Wivenhoe Dam because they live immediately downstream.

7. By letter to the Commission dated 23 May 2011, the Fernvale residents asked that Seqwater be requested to perform modelling to ascertain the effect of releases from Wivenhoe Dam upon the flooding in Fernvale.

8. In its interim report, the Commission said at p.152:

"The Commission draws no conclusions about the causes of flooding in Fernvale during the January 2011 floods.

The prediction of flooding in Fernvale may require consideration of any releases from the nearby Wivenhoe Dam."

9. The Fernvale residents submit that it is important for them, for Seqwater and for flood operations engineers to understand what releases from Wivenhoe Dam are likely to result in flooding in Fernvale. This understanding can be furthered by an analysis of the extent to which releases from Wivenhoe caused flooding in Fernvale during the January 2011 floods.

10. Accordingly, the Fernvale residents submit that Mr Babister should be asked to address the following questions:

(a) *To what extent was flooding (other than flash flooding) in Fernvale during January 2011 caused by releases from the Somerset and Wivenhoe Dams?*

(b) *What effect would the implementation of different release strategies (identified by Mr Babister in his report of 28 July 2011 and the question at para 5 of this submission) have had on flooding in Fernvale?*

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30 August 2011