

Name of Witness	Graham Edward Barnard
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]
Address and contact details	[REDACTED]
Occupation	Retired
Officer taking statement	Steven Geoffrey Bignell
Date taken	18 April 2011

Graham Edward Barnard States:

1. I am a retired married man [REDACTED] years of age and I currently reside at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] Bellbowrie, 4070. I have lived at this address for the past 20 years, and prior to my retirement I had 23 years service with the Australian Military during which time I reached the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in the Corps of Signals. I also spent 15 years with the Queensland State Government in various management positions but principally in Project Management with the Department of Employment Training and Industrial Relations.
2. I have some skills in disaster management and in 1974 whilst in the Army, I was deployed to Darwin with a number of technical soldiers to assist with the aftermath of Cyclone Tracy.
3. I recall the events of January 2011 as regards to my actions and the circumstances surrounding the use of the Uniting Church at Moggill being utilised as a makeshift evacuation centre immediately prior to and after Moggill and Bellbowrie areas were in-undated with flood waters.
4. I recall the actual day that the flood waters affected the Moggill area as being early on the Wednesday morning, as the evacuation alarm from the local shopping centre was alarming continuously. I think that was the 12th of January.

Exhibit Number:

278

QFCI

Date:

05/05/11

JMB

Witness Signature..... Signature of officer  
Page Number 1 of 7

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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

5. My extended family and friends who live in and around the Moggill area were generally aware that the area was going to be affected by the flood waters due to weather forecasts and the various media reports that were being broadcast via commercial TV, and local radio.
6. Moggill was affected by the floods of 1974 and as the media reports that I had been hearing suggested that the flood peaks would be similar to that of 1974, I knew we were going to go under.
7. In the morning of the day prior to the flood waters inundating Moggill, I received a phone call from my son in-law Matthew Gorman, who is in the local State Emergency Service (SES). Matthew advised that they were preparing for evacuation and asked if it was possible to get the Uniting Church at Moggill opened and operating as an evacuation centre. He asked me as he knew I was Chairman of the Church Property Council.
8. I subsequently called Reverend Costa Stathakis to run the request past him and was advised that he was all ready in the process of opening the church for that purpose.
9. Late morning I went to the church which is located at the corner of Moggill Road, and Kangaroo Gully Road, Moggill, and provided leadership and assistance in the establishment of an evacuation and recovery centre at the Church. Our immediate focus then being on the accommodating and feeding of evacuees.
10. When I arrived at the Church the SES was all ready in attendance and had set up a Command Post within the church. A hand full of Police started arriving that afternoon and they eventually setup their Command centre within the Church. I think it was the following morning the SES moved their command post to the Catholic Church which is located across Moggill road. Eventually we had Police representatives from the Mounted Police, the dog squad, academy staff and Indooroopilly staff all working from the church.

Witness Signature..... Signature of officer ..  
Page Number 2 of 7

11. I maintained initial control of the operation of the evacuation centre for the first couple of days, working closely with the Police and SES, before handing that role over to Andrew Soloman, as Andrew and I had been basically job sharing the role. As supplies were becoming an issue, I then concentrated on the logistics to ensure that we had sufficient water, food, medical supplies, and bedding etc.
12. We had the Church set up to provide bedding for 20 to 30 evacuees, and we also set up a alternative sleeping area within the after school care centre at the Moggill State School. However, the Church building was only utilised for sleeping by a small number of evacuees who either had animals with them or who didn't want to be accommodated with other people. From memory the School building was not used for accommodation.
13. Our priority was to try and find evacuees accommodation with other families who had not been affected by the floods. We had volunteers ringing around the local community to find people who where prepared to take evacuees into their homes. All in all I believe we housed 100's of people in this manner. We have records of those who were accommodated with other families.
14. All the beds, blankets, food, water, generators, etc utilised at the church were all donated by members of the public and church members to assist in the evacuation process. We had little to start with but it didn't take long before people were turning up with eskies full of donated food. No government or council assistance was provided in this area until after the flood peak, and once the roads had reopened a few of days later.
15. The kitchen in the Church provided breakfast, lunch and dinner for evacuees, volunteers, Police, SES and many families who were without power. A bbq was running continuously throughout the day. We also provided food drops for the clean up crews around the area.
16. From the start we operated a registration and information desk which at any given time had up to 10 people working. We had two registers, which in the beginning were paper based. One register was operated to register the details of people who

Witness Signature..... Signature of officer .

were donating or otherwise offering assistance. The second was used to register the details of the people who were evacuees and required accommodation or otherwise required assistance from the centre.

17. A female federal police officer who lives locally assisted us in transferring the registers over to a computer based system. All the original paper based records were transferred over to the computer based registers. I do not know what happened to the original paper work, however I believe a copy of the electronic register was later provided to Constable Leesa Richardson of the Local Police Beat, and I believe Reverend Stathakis also has a copy.
18. Some of the community volunteers we had included doctors, nurses and trained counsellors all of who provided assistance and allowed us to provide medical, emotional and professional counselling and support to displaced families. At one stage we even had a medical triage surgery operating within the church.
19. No external support of a logistic nature was provided until the flood waters had receded and road access was re-established. The first substantial assistance we received from the government consisted of two Army UNIMOG vehicles which came in I think just after the roads were opened. These vehicles were full of supplies.
20. Apart from the first supplies brought in by the UNIMOGS I had great difficulty in trying to arrange for supplies via the government or council disaster co-ordination staff; through the Police channels. The government or council staff operating the disaster coordination centres didn't seem to appreciate that we were still cut off and that our only shopping area was underwater. They seemed obstructive in my attempts to get essential supplies. With welcome support from our Local Counsellor and State Member, the problems were corrected.
21. Eventually, I was advised to liaise with Coles directly and as a result of that call we eventually received between 30 to 40 pallet loads of emergency food and essential items such as toilet paper, disposable towel, tissues, water, and long life

 Witness Signature.....  Signature of officer.  
Page Number 4 of 7

milk, ice, etc. The first semi trailer loads of supplies were delivered late at night the day following the UNIMOGS arrived.

22. We closed down the centre about two weeks after it was first established. Any left over donations and food stuffs were packaged into relief packages and are being delivered to flood affected families who are identified as being in need.

**RESPONSES PERTAINING TO THE FLOOD COMMISSION TERMS OF REFERENCE**

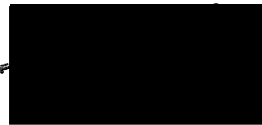
23. I am not part of an official disaster management team in the Moggill area. I am not aware of any official disaster management plan.

24. With regards to the preparation and planning, apart from the radio and TV warnings of the impending flood waters I saw no evidence of any planning to put measures in place to care for displaced people of the community during the flooding. Certainly there was no evidence of any measures being in place for a formal evacuation centre prior to our involvement.

25. I have not had any direct experience with regards to the performance of private insurers. My only experience here has been post flood event from discussions with local individuals who either did not have insurance or who claim their policies have not been honoured.

26. Immediately after the event the government and council response was very good. There is a need for ongoing State Government support at the local level, which does not appear to be happening.

27. The community response right from the start was excellent. Apart from local Police and SES staff who were trapped in the area and did a brilliant job, the government response was minimal until at such time that the roads were reopened. Then, the government response was slow and difficult at least for the first couple of days. The BCC response with volunteers was excellent for the actual clean-up.



28. Communication during the event was difficult. Many land lines during the power outage could not be used, which mean reliance on mobile phone for which the reception was poor at times. The charging of mobile phones was an issue, where possible being recharged via the few generators. A few locals still with power had signs outside their homes offering to recharge mobiles.
29. Community radio, particularly the ABC, provide good feed back to the community as to what was happening. The police also provided good information, regular updates and were very helpful..
30. I do not have any issue with the adequacy of the weather forecasts, and I do not see what more could have been done in this respect.
31. A major problem with the recovery effort was that the whilst a lot of the State Emergency Service staff resided in the Moggill area the Depot where the boats and the rescue gear were stored is located at Mt Crosby which was cut off by the flood waters. This meant that the SES staffs were unable to get access to some of their rescue equipment they needed.
32. I think this event identified major problems with regards to the development planning within the Moggill Bellbowrie areas. As it currently stands all the shopping and essential services are located in one of the worst affected flood areas. Some four months after the event the local and only shopping centre which includes Coles, is still closed due the flooding.
33. All in all I believe the community response was fantastic, and so were the endeavours of the local SES and police, I believe the Government and Council need to implement better preparatory and planning measures for any further

events rather than the adhoc measures implemented pre-event event on this occasion.



G. Barnard

**Justices Act Acknowledgement**

**Justices Act 1886**

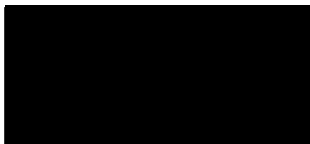
I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(6C)(c) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 18/4/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 7 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 at Brisbane this 21<sup>st</sup> day of April 2011



Witness Signature..... Signature of officer

