



Rockhampton Office
232 Bolsover St, Rockhampton
Gracemere Office
1 Ranger St, Gracemere
Mount Morgan Office
32 Hall St, Mount Morgan
Yeppoon Office
70 Anzac Parade, Yeppoon

31 March 2011

Justice C E Holmes
Commissioner
Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry
Level 30
400 George Street
Brisbane QLD 4001



File

Dear Justice Holmes,

Re: Requirement to Provide Information to Commission of Inquiry

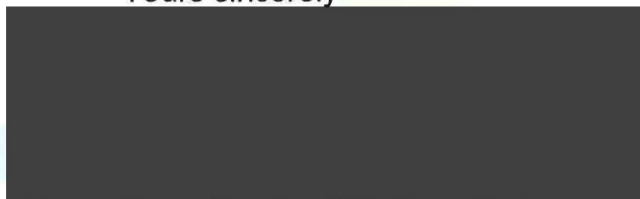
We refer to your letter of 22 March 2011, in which you required us to furnish you with information in our capacities as Chair of the Rockhampton Local Disaster Management Group and Local Disaster Co-ordinator. The attached information is to be read as a joint response to these requests.

With respect to the 21 points listed in your letter, please find numbered responses that address each point. Where information has been previously supplied in response to your initial Requirement to Provide Information, dated 1 March 2011, that has been identified against the relevant request.

In regards to the specific request for provision of information with respect to any communications or involvement with specific agencies, the responses are limited to the formal documented communication and involvement with those agencies that took place during the event as the recording of informal or adhoc communication is not practical and would be based on recollection after the fact.

We have interpreted, as best we can, the details required in response to your requests and if the information provided has not accurately reflected the nature of the information that you required, please do not hesitate to contact us and we will seek to provide any further relevant information if it is available.

Yours sincerely



Councillor Brad Carter
Mayor of Rockhampton Regional Council
Chair of Rockhampton LDMG



Gavin Steele
Local Disaster Co-ordinator

- 1. The local planning and preparation, including training, undertaken in advance of and/or in relation to the 2010/11 flood events.**

The Rockhampton Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) conducts an annual exercise prior to the onset of the wet season each year in addition to regular statutory meetings of the LDMG each year to ensure preparedness and to update agency contact details.

The Rockhampton Regional Council purchased the Guardian Control Centre System, an IT disaster management system for use in the Rockhampton LDMG's Local Disaster Co-ordination Centre (LDCC) in 2010 and it was activated and utilised for the first time during the 2010/2011 flood events.

The training and preparations undertaken prior to the 2010/2011 flood events is included in the following table;

Date	Training	Participants	Provider
12 Sept 2009	Exercise – LDCC Operations	LDCC Council Staff, Agency Liaison Officers from QFRS, QPS, SES, QAS, EMQ	RRC – LDC
17 Dec 2009	Disaster Management – Concept of Operations	LDMG Members	EMQ Regional Director – Rockhampton
17 Feb 2010	LDMG Statutory meeting	LDMG Members	Chair LDMG
3 March 2010	DDMG Statutory meeting	DDMG Members	Chair DDMG
2-4 June 2010	LGAQ Disaster Management Conference – Home Hill	Chair LDMG Deputy Chair LDMG LDC Disaster Officer	LGAQ
6 Sept 2010	LDMG Statutory meeting	LDMG Members	Chair LDMG
13 Oct 2010	LDCC – Guardian Control Centre System	Agency Liaison Officers from QPS, QAS, SES, EMQ	QIT Plus (System Developers)
14 Oct 2010	LDCC – Guardian Control Centre System	LDCC Council Staff	QIT Plus (System Developers)
18 Nov 2010	Roles, responsibilities and functions of LDMG	LDMG Members	EMQ Area Director - Rockhampton
10 Dec 2010	Exercise – LDCC Operations utilising Guardian system	LDCC Council Staff, Agency Liaison Officers from QFRS, QPS, SES, QAS, EMQ	RRC, QIT Plus (System Developer)

In addition to the above activities, the Rockhampton Airport, which is wholly owned and operated by the Rockhampton Regional Council, undertakes an annual disaster training exercise as part of its legislative obligations from CASA and the Office of Transport Security to maintain its aerodrome licence.

This exercise is generally focused on issues regarding a possible airplane incident which impacts passenger safety and airport security, however the key response agencies involved would also be involved in mobilising as a result of impacts to the airport from severe weather events or other natural disasters and as such this training is incorporated as part of the disaster management training for this key piece of Council infrastructure and members of the Rockhampton LDMG are involved as observers in this activity.

- End of response -

2. Any measures implemented immediately prior to or during the 2010/11 flood events that were designed to mitigate the effect of any flooding (for example , sandbagging, temporary levees) including an assessment of the performance of those measures.

The Rockhampton Local Disaster Management Group undertook an extensive range of measures to mitigate the effects of flooding to private and public assets.

Those measures utilised to protect the Airport and Council's Wastewater Treatment Plants are included in the response to Item 8.

The Rockhampton LDMG together with the local SES provided 20,000 sandbags for distribution to the public and provided stockpiles of sand throughout the Regional Council area for residents to be able to fill their own sandbags. The sand stockpiles were continually monitored and replenished throughout the flood response.

The LDMG also co-ordinated a Community Assistance exercise where members of the community were invited to volunteer their time to fill sandbags at the Rockhampton Showgrounds. The LDMG arranged for the provision of empty sandbags and sand stockpiles at the Showgrounds and in excess of 5000 sandbags were filled by the volunteers.

These filled sandbags were utilised by the SES for emergency calls and calls for assistance received from those members of the public that were not physically capable of protecting their own homes.

This exercise proved very successful and most home owners and business owners in flood-prone areas of the region utilised sandbags to protect their property from flood waters.

The LDMG was activated on 6th December 2010 for the first flood to hit the region which reached a peak of 7.65m on 16th December 2010. The LDMG activated again on 28th December 2010 for the second flood which peaked at 9.2m on 6th January 2011.

The Rockhampton Regional Council also launched a "Be Prepared – Natural Disasters Happen" DVD (copy attached) on 15th October 2010, which was mailed to at risk residents in the community and also available on-line on Council's website and free of charge at Council's Customer Service Centres at Yeppoon, Rockhampton, Gracemere and Mount Morgan.

The DVD was aimed at ensuring the community was prepared for natural disasters. The DVD was actively promoted in local media and also distributed by Council's elected representatives to key community groups and at community events prior to Christmas. Approximately 10,000 copies of the DVD have been distributed and the contents of the DVD can be streamed via Council's website.

The LDMG created flood inundation maps for the Regional Council area at river heights of 8.5m and 9m on 29th December 2010 which were placed in major shopping centres, in Council Libraries and on Council's website and also published in the local newspaper, The Morning Bulletin, on 30th December 2010.

Due to new advice from BOM on 30th December 2010 indicating a possible higher flood peak, new flood inundation maps showing a river height of 9.5m were updated at all locations and on Council's website.

The LDMG also undertook a letterbox drop of approximately 2000 residences in possible flood inundation areas on 30th December 2010 to warn residents of the need to consider evacuation based on the latest flood warning advice. A copy of this letter which was also included in the initial response to the first Request for Information received from the Flood Commission of Inquiry, dated 1 March 2011, is attached.

- End of Response -

COPY

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30 December 2010

To the Resident

Due to the expected impending flood level of the Fitzroy River to approximately 9.4 meters, your property is likely to be significantly impacted by flood waters. Predictions are the water levels will remain above 9 meters for up to ten (10) days.

We urge you to relocate to friends or family in higher ground, taking with you appropriate clothing including wet weather gear, pets, medication, toiletries, linen and towels and appropriate footwear.

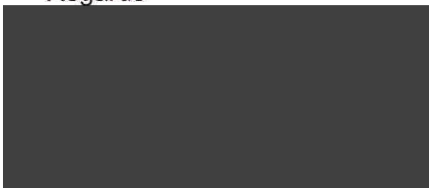
If you are unable to secure alternate accommodation Council has prepared an evacuation centre at the Sports Centre, located at the Central Queensland University (CQU) on Yamba Road. The centre will be open from 8am Friday 31 December 2010 however please contact 1300 652 659 if you require this service.

When evacuating, please ensure you remember to take the following:

- Appropriate clothing including wet weather gear;
- Medication;
- Toiletries;
- Linen and towels; and
- Appropriate footwear.

If you require any immediate assistance please contact the Local Disaster Coordination Centre which is open from 8am to 10.30pm on Thursday 30 December 2010. From Friday 31 December 2010 the centre will be operating 24 hours a day.

Regards



Mayor Brad Carter
Chair of the Local Disaster Management Group
Enquiries: 1300 652 659

- 3. Local participation, or otherwise, in Emergency Management Queensland's (EMQ) 2010 Pre-Season Flood and Cyclone Workshop, including an assessment of the local assistance gained thereby.**

The Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) 2010 Pre-Season Flood and Cyclone Workshop was conducted in Rockhampton on 14th October 2010.

The workshop was attended by the following members from Rockhampton Regional Council*;

Mayor Brad Carter – Chair of Rockhampton LDMG
Mr Gavin Steele – Rockhampton Local Disaster Co-ordinator (LDC)
Mr Martin Crow – Deputy Local Disaster Co-ordinator (DLDC)
Mr Eddie Cowie – Rockhampton Regional Council SES Local Controller

*Full lists of attendance of State Agency representatives, including those that are part of the Rockhampton LDMG, can be obtained from EMQ Rockhampton who facilitated the workshop.

With respect to the assistance gained by attending the Flood and Cyclone Workshop, given that it is predominantly focused on weather forecasts for the upcoming season, the primary benefit is purely to gain an awareness of the current weather environment (specifically in this instance the La Nina event) and the predictions of tropical cyclone activity that can be expected.

In regards to the Bureau of Meteorology information that is presented at the workshop, it is well presented and very informative and assists to inform us with respect to our LDMG planning.

Feedback given at the conclusion of the workshop suggested that the workshop should be more concise and that other than the BOM advice, there was little to be gained from the other general information provided by EMQ and others which just seemed to pad out the programme.

- End of Response -

4. **Local participation, or otherwise, in EMQ's 2010 Consultation Sessions concerning the proposed changes to the *Disaster Management Act 2003 (Qld)*, including an assessment of the local assistance gained thereby.**

The Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) Consultation Session concerning the proposed changes to the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (Qld) was conducted in Rockhampton on 23rd April 2010.

The Consultation Workshop conducted in Rockhampton Regional Council Chambers was attended by the following members from Rockhampton Regional Council;

Deputy Mayor Rose Swadling – Deputy Chair of Rockhampton LDMG
Mr Evan Pardon – Chief Executive Officer, Rockhampton Regional Council
Mr Gavin Steele – Rockhampton Local Disaster Co-ordinator (LDC)
Mr Andrew Bicknell – Disaster Management Officer

An Information Session on changes to the *Disaster Management Act 2003* (Qld) was conducted on 30 July 2010 at Frenchville Sports Club, Rockhampton, by EMQ which was attended by the following members of Rockhampton Regional Council*;

Mayor Brad Carter – Chair of the Rockhampton LDMG
Mr Evan Pardon – Chief Executive Officer
Mr Gavin Steele – Rockhampton Local Disaster Co-ordinator (LDC)
Mr Martin Crow – Deputy Local Disaster Co-ordinator (DLDC)
Mr Andrew Bicknell – Disaster Management Officer
Mr Eddie Cowie – SES Local Controller

*Full lists of attendance of State Agency representatives, including those that are part of the Rockhampton LDMG, can be obtained from EMQ Rockhampton, who hosted the session.

With respect to the assistance gained by attending the Consultation Workshop and Information Session, it was informative to understand the continuing role of Local Government in disaster management arrangements and the changing roles of the Queensland Police Service and EMQ in managing disasters at District and State level.

The confirmation of the escalation process for requests for assistance from Local to District to State was also important in ensuring an effective response.

The fact that all State Government Departments were expected to have an understanding of the new Act and that wider communication to achieve this at the State level was proposed as part of the roll-out, was seen as a positive outcome to address ongoing anomalies being experienced at the local level.

Historically, local LDMG's were being excluded from particular incidents as one State Government Department was seen as the lead agency and consideration to the impact on the wider local community was not generally understood.

Rockhampton Regional Council experienced this during the Hendra Virus outbreak in August 2009 when DPI and QLD Health were the lead agencies, the Rockhampton Bushfires in October 2009 where QFRS was the Lead Agency and initially when the Chinese Bulk Carrier (Shen Neng 1) grounded on the Great Barrier Reef in April 2010 and Maritime Safety Qld (MSQ) were the Lead Agency.

- End of Response -

- 5. Any measures taken to train and/or equip the local State Emergency Services (SES), including an assessment of the adequacy and timeliness thereof.**

Upon the formation of Rockhampton Regional Council as a result of the Queensland Local Government amalgamations in March 2008, the Rockhampton Regional Council inherited five (5) SES Units that operate within the new local government area.

To address the logistics of dealing with the five (5) separate SES Groups, Council appointed a full-time SES Local Controller, Mr Eddie Cowie, in November 2009, to oversee the day to day operations of the various SES Groups and to consolidate their training and equipment and supply needs. Whilst the Local Controller is a Council Officer, during disaster events he is a volunteer member of the SES and falls under the control and tasking of EMQ.

Council maintains an annual operational budget to provide an appropriate level of support to the local SES Groups together with some financial assistance, by way of an annual subsidy, provided to Council from the State Government to assist. The State Government and Council recently jointly funded the purchase of five (5) new SES Emergency Response vehicles at a cost of \$300,000 to ensure the ongoing effectiveness of the SES Groups.

SES Training is provided in-house by senior SES members and by EMQ.

The attached statement from Mr Eddie Cowie, Rockhampton Regional Council SES Local Controller, outlines the activities undertaken in response to the recent 2010/2011 flood events and the SES training undertaken.

- End of Response -

To Whom It May Concern:

I, Edward Conrad Cowie of Rockhampton, Queensland make the following statements.

I am the appointed Local Controller for the Rockhampton Regional Council State Emergency Service Unit and I am employed by the Rockhampton Regional Council in this position.

I am responding to the request from the Commission of Enquiry surrounding the Queensland Floods with information specifically relating to the State Emergency Service activities that occur within the Rockhampton Regional Council local government boundaries, prior to and during the 2010/2011 flood events.

- Planning and preparation for the flood events was a consistent process for the Rockhampton Regional Council State Emergency Service Unit with regular SES Group training meetings, group training courses, requestion of equipment/flood supplies and communication processes undertaken during 2010/2011.
- The Rockhampton Regional Council SES Local Controller regularly engaged the community via the media in the preparation, response, and the recovery stages of this event to assist in articulating the message of preparation and resilience of the community to this flood event.
- Ongoing competency maintenance at the Unit/Group level of SES members who already have qualifications that related to the agreed SES Functions of Storm Damage, Flood Boat, Incident Management and Agency Support occurring during 2010.
- Rockhampton Regional Council State Emergency Service Unit Executive volunteers were consistently engaged to ensure that they had appropriate resources available at the SES Group level to respond to incidents of Storm Damage during the 2010/2011 flood event.
- Rockhampton Regional Council provided an 'Operational Budget' to every SES Group within the Rockhampton Regional Council SES Unit to ensure that all Rockhampton Regional Council State Emergency Service Unit equipment was operational and fully maintained to ensure SES response. Equipment such as chainsaws, pole saws, generators, flood boats, storm damage trailers, SES vehicles etc are all included in this process
- Rockhampton Regional Council purchased/replaced 5 SES Storm Damage response vehicles at a total cost of over \$300,000 in 2010 with a further 3 SES Rescue Trucks to be replaced within this 2010/2011 financial year.
- The Rockhampton Regional Council State Emergency Service Local Controller attended the '2010-2011 Queensland Tropical Cyclone Consultative Committee Cyclone, Storm and Flood Season Seminar', the 'Natural Disaster Relief and Recovery Arrangements Workshop (10/02/2010)' and the Consultation Sessions regarding the proposed changes to the Disaster Management Act 2003 (30/7/2010)
- Due to an obvious decline in training offered by Emergency Management Queensland over recent years to State Emergency Service volunteers, the Rockhampton Regional Council State Emergency Service Unit has had to

establish a Unit Training Group to meet the requirements of minimum training of SES members within the Rockhampton Regional Council SES Unit.

- In 2010 the Rockhampton Regional Council SES Unit identified and appointed 2 SES Honorary Unit Training Officers to assist in Unit training.
- Due to inconsistency in Regional EMQ training, some training has become reactive not proactive in many agreed SES Functions within the SES in 2010/2011.
- The Rockhampton Regional Council State Emergency Service Unit assisted the Rockhampton Regional Council to establish sand piles and make available to the community sandbags during the response stage of the flood events.
- SES teams responding within the Rockhampton Regional Council area distributed over 20,000 sandbags during the flood event.
- SES teams responded and sandbagged numerous properties, critical facilities and infrastructure including constructing flood barriers at the Rockhampton Airport Terminal, Rockhampton Ambulance Station in preparation and the response to the flooding in 2010/2011.
- SES teams in the Rockhampton Regional Council area responded to over 2000 requests for assistance during the 2010/2011 flood event.
- SES teams in the Rockhampton Regional Council area were involved in numerous requests for flood boat assistance including requests for residents to be self evacuated, requests for flood boat transportation of critical staff, emergency service personal, numerous medical transfers for serious/critical/deceased persons and food/ medical/ re-supply to residents.
- SES flood boat teams within the Rockhampton Regional Council responded to the Bajool area in the lead up to the Rockhampton Floods to assist Queensland Police in the search, location and body retrieval of a deceased male who died while crossing a flooded waterway.

- 6. The local actions undertaken in advance of and/or in respect of the 2010/2011 flood events in relation to resourcing, co-ordination and deployment of any personnel and equipment.**

The Rockhampton LDMG met on 24th December 2010 to confirm arrangements over the Christmas/New Year break and to ensure that Agency contacts were up to date and to determine availability of key agency contacts or alternates if normal members were on leave.

After heavy local rainfall Christmas Day and overnight into Boxing Day the Rockhampton LDMG went to 'Watch Stage' on 26th December 2010. The SES responded to calls as a result of localised flooding in the Mount Morgan area late on the 25th and early on the 26th December 2010.

In response to advice from BOM about heavy rainfall recorded throughout the Fitzroy River catchment and possible flooding, the Rockhampton LDMG activated on 28th December 2010 and the Local Disaster Co-ordination Centre (LDCC) was opened to act as a central point of communication.

Prior to Christmas, Rockhampton Regional Council had undertaken a survey of available staff over the Christmas/New Year period and as a result, these staff were contacted and advised that they would be required and rosters were created to fill the Council roles within the LDCC.

Whilst the LDMG and Council specifically, is responsible for the operations of the LDCC with assistance from relevant State Agencies, the responsibility for staffing of those specific State agencies is an issue for those relevant departments and the Council, Chair of the LDMG and LDC do not have any control over resourcing in State Departments.

As an observation, all other LDMG member agencies appeared to have undertaken similar planning to Council and were able to quickly fill rosters with available staff to provide the required level of response. We are aware that as an example the QPS was able to deploy an additional 60 Police to the region to respond to the flood event.

EMQ also arranged for SES crews from throughout the State to provide additional support and relief to local SES crews throughout the event.

The QFRS also deployed additional staff to manage the LDMG's air operations unit which consisted of helicopters located at Council's Heritage Village which were utilised to access remote or isolated communities, undertake resupply and perform emergency air-lifts if required.

Specific resourcing, co-ordination and deployment information for each State Agency during the flood event is best sourced directly from the relevant agency.

- 7. The local actions undertaken in respect of the 2010/2011 flood events in relation to immediate management, response and recovery operations, including the co-ordination and deployment of personnel and equipment.**

Given that the response to Item 6 fundamentally dealt with the preparations for the response aspect of the flood disaster operations from a resourcing and deployment aspect, in response to this item I will focus on specific actions that were undertaken.

LDMG Key Tactical Deployment Decisions

Air Operations

The LDMG decided early on within the flood event that the airport was likely to be inundated and non-operational for a period of time due to the predicted flood peak from BOM.

To address the impacts on aviation and the perceived demand for possible resupply activities to remote or isolated communities, emergency medical evacuations and deployment of personnel across flood waters, the LDMG designated an Air Operations staging point for helicopter operations. Together with the QFRS and the local ADF, a helicopter landing area and staging point was set up at the Rockhampton Heritage Village.

The LDMG also submitted a Request for Assistance to the District Disaster Management Group which was then forwarded to the State Disaster Management Group for early deployment of three (3) Blackhawk Helicopters from the ADF for possible heavy lift operations. These appliances were approved and deployed to Rockhampton and staged out of the Western Street Army Barracks.

Evacuation Centre

The LDMG co-ordinated the set-up of an Evacuation Centre at the Central Queensland (CQ) University, which commenced operations on 31st December 2010.

Further details regarding this Centre are provided in response to Item 13.

Sand bags and Sand Stockpiles

The LDMG co-ordinated the allocation of sand bags and sand stockpiles throughout the Regional Council area in order to allow residents to protect their private property. The LDMG also arranged for a volunteer day where empty sand bags were filled by volunteer members of the community with sand supplied at the Rockhampton Showgrounds. Over 5000 sand bags were filled as a result of this exercise.

Flood Information and Awareness Activities

1. The LDMG arranged for a door to door letterbox drop to approximately 2000 properties that were potentially going to be impacted by the predicted flood.
2. The Chair of the LDMG secured a daily morning spot on local radio to disseminate information and a media scrum was held at 10am every morning

after the daily LDMG meeting to brief all media (Local, State, National and International) on the latest flood advice.

3. Rockhampton Regional Council's website was update daily with Fact Sheets and links to other key agencies.
4. Media releases were issued every day after the LDMG meeting to local radio and print organisations and appeared in the local newspaper, The Morning Bulletin.
5. Flood Inundation Maps were supplied to the local newspaper and printed full page to show residents if their properties were likely to be impacted.
6. Flood Inundation Maps were placed on Council's website.
7. Flood Inundation Maps were placed in all major Shopping Centres and at Council Libraries and Customer Service Centres.
8. The LDMG co-ordinated a door to door assessment of properties and their occupants in Depot Hill to ensure their awareness and preparedness for the impending flood. This door to door exercise involved Police, SES, Council, QFRS and Ergon.

Recovery Centre

The LDMG co-ordinated the set-up of a Recovery Centre at Schotia Place where free clean-up kits, donated goods and Counselling services were available to those members of the public who had water into their properties and/or over the floorboards of their house.

Bulk Clean Service

The LDMG co-ordinated a bulk clean service for all properties in flood affected areas. This bulk clean service was undertaken by QFRS, SES and Council and involved removal of all water damaged property out onto the footpath for collection, hosing out of inundated areas, spreading of lime on footpath and front yards to reduce odour and assist with break-up of clay and silt deposited from flood waters.

Community Clean-Up Day

The LDMG co-ordinated a Community Clean-Up Day on 22nd January 2011 with over 200 community volunteers assisting with clean-up activities throughout the city. The volunteers were provided a safety briefing by Rockhampton Regional Council staff and their work was co-ordinated by the local SES.

Kerbside Clean-Up Service

The LDMG co-ordinated a free kerbside clean-up service for all materials that were water damaged and had been placed out on the footpath by residents or had been moved out onto the footpath as part of the bulk clean exercise.

This service was performed by Rockhampton Regional Council staff and selected local machinery contractors.

- End of Response -

- 8. Any local measures taken or requested to preserve vital infrastructure and to manage, maintain or reinstate the supply of essential services (water, food, power, transport, communications and/or sewerage) during the 2010/2011 flood events.**

The LDMG undertook extensive measures during the 2010/2011 flood event to protect and preserve vital infrastructure and ensure supply of essential services. These actions included;

Sewerage and Wastewater Treatment Plant Activities

Attendance by Council staff (Fitzroy River Water (FRW) employees) at all properties likely to be inundated and plugging of overflow relief gullies to avoid floodwater intrusion into the sewerage infrastructure and to maintain service continuity to private properties.

Removal of 'at risk' sewerage treatment plant equipment from areas of possible inundation.

Fuel stockpiling for possible use for power generation to ensure operation of treatment plants in the event of power loss.

Stockpiling of sewerage treatment plant chemicals in the advent of extended period of isolation from supply due to flooding.

Co-ordination with Ergon Energy to ensure continuity of power supply during the flood event.

Disconnection of 'at risk' sewerage pump station switchboards from electricity supply.

Liaison with regulators (DERM, QHealth) on environmental and public health issues.

Regular updating of operations on FRW website during flood event.

The Rockhampton Regional Council Wastewater Treatment plants continued to operated throughout the entire 2010/2011 flood event.

Water Treatment Plant

There were no impacts to Council's water treatment plant during the 2010/2011 flood event.

Food Resupply

The LDMG through the LDCC set up a food resupply arrangement which was in effect from 31 December 2010 with a major grocery retailer (email attached) who had adequate local supplies at the time to provide food for remote or isolated communities.

The food would be ordered and paid for by the resident and the food would be packed by the supermarket and then delivered to the air operations staging point for delivery by helicopter to the isolated resident.

Contact from the LDCC was regularly made with local major grocery and fuel retailers to ensure adequate supplies were maintained and that adequate planning was in place for resupply.

The LDCC co-ordinated the use of an SES flood boat and an ADF Unimog to ship food supplies and bakery ingredients from Rockhampton to the Gracemere township when supplies had become depleted.

Power

The LDMG invited Ergon Energy to all meetings of the LDMG to co-ordinate the communication of information regarding proposed power disconnections and to collaboratively ensure continuity of supply for critical assets.

Transport

During the 2010/2011 flood event the Bruce Highway at the southern entrance to Rockhampton was cut by flood waters for two (2) weeks. The Rockhampton Airport was out of operation for a period of three (3) weeks.

The Department of Transport and Main Roads (DTMR) had responsibility for undertaking the assessment and necessary repairs required prior to the reopening of the Bruce Highway.

The LDMG sought to protect the airport terminal and the airport control tower, which contains a significant amount of electrical switch equipment essential to the operation of the airport, by installing a temporary flood barrier, which is owned by EMQ. The flood barrier (2 lengths of 500m each) was deployed from Brisbane and Townsville and set up around the perimeter of the airport terminal and control tower (See attached images). This barrier proved effective in ensuring that the terminal and control tower were unaffected by flood waters.

Other measures taken at the Airport to protect the infrastructure and return it to full operation after the floods are detailed in the attached correspondence and Situation Reports.

Communications

Communications were generally unaffected during the 2010/2011 flood event.

Gavin Steele

From: Barnes Laurence [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 31 December 2010 3:15 PM
To: Gavin Steele
Subject: RE: Food Supply for Remote Communities

Gavin,

1. The store phone number is [REDACTED] and the contact person will be Linda Huth.
2. The customer will have to supply their credit card details for payment.
3. Could orders be placed between 8am and 10am. (depending on time required for helicopter)
4. We don't have any way of delivering to the Heritage Village.
5. We are open on Monday but with limited staff.

Could give us a days notice if this service is going to happen so we could arrange staff and keep boxes.

Regards,

Laurie Barnes
Northside Plaza Woolworths.

-----Original Message-----

From: Gavin Steele [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, 31 December 2010 1:09 PM
To: Barnes Laurence
Subject: Food Supply for Remote Communities

Lawrie,

Thank you for your assistance. The attached document is what we would require in regards to packaging up the goods. As discussed, this is preliminary planning only at this stage and may not be required. The way we would see it working is that we would supply the isolated properties with a contact number from your store and they would place their order by a set time each day and provide you their name and address, you would arrange filling the orders and payment and packing and we would co-ordinate to have the packed goods transported to the Rockhampton Heritage Village at a set time each day for airlift to the isolated communities at a set time. We would see this process being repeated every 4 days.

In regards to information from you, can you let me know the following;

1. The phone number that residents can call to place orders?
2. What they will need to have to arrange payment (drivers licence number, credit card, etc)?
3. What time would you like orders placed by?
4. Can you delivery orders to the Heritage Village?
5. Probably looking at groceries for approximately 15-20 households per delivery.
6. Are you closed on the public holiday next Monday?
7. Is there any further information you require from me to make this happen?

Regards,

Gavin Steele
General Manager Infrastructure & Planning Services
Rockhampton Regional Council
[REDACTED]

Web: www.rockhamptonregion.qld.gov.au



- 9. Any warning system in place or any information received or obtained concerning weather and flood forecasts or warnings, and the steps taken to disseminate that information to the community before, during and immediately after the 2010/2011 flood events.**

The LDMG undertook extensive public information and communication activities during the 2010/2011 flood events regarding weather and flood forecasts.

The nature and extent of these activities have been included in the response to Item 7 of this document and a copy of all media releases, webpage downloads and general communications were provided in hard copy and electronic format with the original response provided by Rockhampton Regional Council to the Request for Information received from the Queensland Flood Commission of Inquiry, dated 1 March 2011.

In regard to the source and receipt of weather and flood information on which the LDMG make its decision, we rely on the regular updates provided by BOM on their website for river flows and flood predictions and the LDMG would make a direct telephone call each morning during the LDMG meeting to BOM's hydrology unit to compare local river observations with BOM's forecasts and to ensure that the LDMG had the most up to date information available in order to make decisions.

The LDMG has a regular practice of teleconferencing with the BOM hydrologists during events so that all LDMG members have an opportunity to ask questions and get information first-hand from BOM regarding likely local weather and flood predictions.

We have always found this information to be extremely valuable and reliable in managing the impacts of extreme weather events.

- End of Response -

10. In relation to item 9, an indication of the source/s, accuracy and timeliness of that information or effectiveness of the warning system for local purposes.

The response to this particular item has been incorporated into the response provided to Item 9.

The LDMG relies heavily on the information provided by BOM and we found during this event that the information provided to us during our daily teleconference with BOM was extremely timely, accurate and valuable in undertaking our planning.

BOM Flood modelling for the Fitzroy River catchment has been found to be very accurate during recent flood events in our region.

- End of Response -

11. Any local measures undertaken to protect life and private/public property in connection with the 2010/2011 flood events (such as road/bridge closures, evacuation arrangements, etc) and the steps taken to disseminate information about those measures to the community before, during and immediately after the 2010/2011 flood events.

The response to this particular item has been predominantly addressed in the responses provided to Items 2, 7 and 8.

In addition, the LDMG issued media releases about local road closures which were updated daily and placed on Council's webpage and provided to the RACQ for input to their website.

Rockhampton Regional Council staff worked throughout the flood event placing 'Road Closed' and 'Water over Road' signage throughout the region as well as setting up temporary detours around inundated areas to ensure continual access where possible.

Council staff worked with Qld Police to ensure road safety was not compromised and Qld Police undertook some surveillance and enforcement of areas subject to load limits and road closures to ensure compliance and public safety was maintained.

No Fly Zone

With regards to measures specifically taken to protect life, the LDMG secured a 'No Fly Zone' over Rockhampton which limited the air traffic in the skies above the City to emergency aircraft only. This measure was to reduce the possibility of an aircraft related accident due to many rural landowners and private individuals owning light planes and helicopters which through their uncontrolled operations could jeopardise the safety of others and impede emergency aircraft from fulfilling their responsibilities. This measure proved very effective.

Marine Craft Exclusion Zone

The LDMG also requested MSQ designate the Yeppen Floodplain as a marine craft exclusion zone in order to guard against private boat owners entering the flood waters and utilising small boats for ferrying of goods or passengers across an area of high speed floodwaters. In the 1991 flood event in Rockhampton, three (3) people in a small boat had drowned and the LDMG wished to ensure that the chances of a repeat of such an event were reduced.

The Qld Water Police patrolled the flood waters to ensure compliance with the boating restrictions that were in place. This measure also proved to be very effective.

- End of Response -

12. The circumstances of any rescues or evacuations performed in the local area in connection with the 2010/11 flood events, including an assessment of the adequacy and timeliness thereof.

The LDMG was not required to make any arrangements for urgent rescues or forced evacuations during the 2010/2011 flood event.

The LDMG did co-ordinate an exercise in the Depot Hill and Port Curtis areas with Council staff, Police and SES to assist people who were self-evacuating from their properties by providing assistance with transport and movement of personal items.

Approximately 500 people chose to self-evacuate during the 2010/2011 flood event with the majority of those people choosing to stay with friends, relatives or in commercial accommodation (hotels, motels).

- End of Response -

13. The circumstances of the establishment and subsequent operation and performance of any Evacuation Centre/s in the local area, including an assessment of any particular difficulties encountered.

The LDMG established an Evacuation Centre at Central Queensland (CQ) University on 31st December 2010 which could accommodate up to 600 people. There was further accommodation on-site in a dormitory area for a further 400 people if required. The Evacuation Centre closed on Friday 21st January 2011, after 3 weeks of operation.

The Evacuation Centre was set up and staffed by Red Cross with the Salvation Army providing catering. At its peak the Evacuation Centre accommodated 187 people.

The LDMG also arranged for housing of companion animals on an adjoining facility which, at its peak, catered for over 60 dogs, cats and birds. The LDMG arranged for the RSPCA to have a fulltime Officer to tend to the animals during their stay.

The issue of evacuees wanting to bring companion animals with them was highlighted early and the LDMG was able to plan to accommodate this desire which proved to be beneficial to many people who had a strong attachment to their pets and would have suffered further emotional distress had that not occurred.

The Salvation Army were able to utilise the catering facilities and commercial kitchens that were available at the South Rockhampton TAFE College, which due to the time of year, was vacant for the school holiday period. This was also extremely timely in regards to having facilities suitable to prepare three (3) meals a day for a large number of people.

Key learnings from the set up and operation of the Evacuation Centre revolved around the mental health and special needs issues associated with some of the centres occupants and how these issues can be appropriately handled in an Evacuation Centre environment, particularly when occupants may be there for extended periods.

Concerns about anti-social behaviour also resulted in the LDMG providing a permanent security presence with a Security Guard on-site and regular attendance at the facility by members of the QPS to provide assistance to the Red Cross volunteers when any anti-social issues arose.

The accommodation and food provided to occupants was of a high standard so much so that there were concerns that some occupants of the Centre may not wish to leave, particularly those who were displaced or in lower socio-economic groups, once the flood event was over.

Assistance and counselling from State Agencies and Community Groups was provided to occupants to address the above issues and ensure that every occupant of the Centre had access to appropriate support networks and suitable accommodation to go to once the Centre closed. This strategy proved successful and affective in integrating people back into the community.

14. The circumstances of any flood related human fatality within the region, including the measures taken to prevent and/or respond to any such fatality, during the 2010/2011 flood events.

There were no local fatalities during the 2010/2011 flood event.

- End of Response -

15. Any involvement had with State or Federal agencies, including particularly the Queensland Police Service, in relation to the provision of emergency response measures, personnel, equipment, services or logistical support, together with an assessment of the adequacy and timeliness thereof, during the 2010/2011 flood events.