

**In the matter of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950*
Commissions of Inquiry Order (No.1) 2011
2011 Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry**

Witness Statement of Air Vice-Marshal Kevin John Paule

1. I, Kevin John Paule, of the Department of Defence, Russell Offices, Canberra in the Australian Capital Territory, make this statement from a combination of my own knowledge and belief after making enquiries within the Department of Defence.
2. The Commonwealth has been asked by solicitors instructing the 2011 Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry to provide a witness statement dealing with a number of matters relevant to the ADF's involvement in the 2010/2011 flood events in Queensland, including specifically the ADF's involvement in the recovery of the Brisbane markets precinct at Rocklea and the ADF's response efforts in Toowoomba, the Lockyer Valley, Grantham, Forest Hill, Oakey and the Western Downs.
3. I currently hold the rank of Air Vice-Marshal in the Australian Defence Force (ADF). I have held this rank since 25 October 2007. My current role is as Head of Military Strategic Commitments Division (MSC). MSC provides strategic level management and situational awareness of potential and current Australian Defence Force commitments. MSC supports the national crisis management arrangements along with providing the coordinated joint military strategic input for engagement with Government, other agencies, allies and coalition partners.
4. I joined the Royal Australian Air Force in 1977 and I am a graduate of the Advanced Staff Course conducted at the Royal Air Force College in Bracknell, England.
5. My more recent military service includes appointment as Director General Joint Operations and Plans from October 2003 until December 2005 and Commander Training - Air Force (subsequently Commander Air Force Training Group) from December 2005 until October 2007. On promotion to Air Vice-Marshal, I was appointed as Commander Integrated Area Defence Systems (Five Power Defence Arrangements) in Butterworth, Malaysia. On 10 December 2010, I became Head MSC.

Overview of Defence Response Capabilities

6. The Defence White Paper 2009 (**White Paper**) states that the *'principal task for the ADF is to deter and defeat armed attacks on Australia by conducting independent military operations without relying on the combat or combat support forces of other countries.'*¹ Consistent with this priority, the White Paper indicates that Defence will provide a supporting element of the Commonwealth response to emergencies and natural disasters; *'Defence's vital role in supporting domestic emergency response efforts will continue, and Defence will continue to support these areas of Commonwealth responsibility.'*² The White Paper further highlights that Defence's force structure is based on war fighting capabilities, some of which can be used for supporting emergency response. Notwithstanding, the ability to assist in domestic emergency response *'does not necessarily create a requirement to maintain an extensive range of specialised capabilities within Defence, as these tasks are primarily the responsibility of civil authorities'*³.
7. An outcome of the Australian Government's direction on the development and use of Defence capability is that the capability deployed in support of war fighting may not be easily or rapidly redirected to support an emergency response. For example, the ADF involvement on operations overseas requires the deployment of significant forces that could not be easily re-deployed to support domestic humanitarian assistance or disaster response operations.

Arrangements for Accessing Defence Resources

8. State and Territory authorities have a responsibility, within their boundaries, for coordinating and planning the response to disasters and civil emergencies. When the total resources (Government, community and commercial) of an affected State or Territory cannot reasonably cope with the needs of the situation, the State or Territory Government can seek assistance from the Commonwealth Government. The Commonwealth Government prepares plans for providing Commonwealth physical resources in response to such requests.

¹ Defence White Paper 2009 – Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030, para 7.2 page 53.

² Defence White Paper 2009 – Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030, para 2.33 page 24.

³ Defence White Paper 2009 – Defending Australia in the Asia Pacific Century: Force 2030, para 8.10 page 59.

9. The Commonwealth Attorney General is responsible for disaster-related matters at the national level. Emergency Management Australia (EMA), a Division within the Commonwealth Attorney-General's Department, is nominated as the agency responsible for planning and coordinating Commonwealth assistance to the States and Territories under the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework. Coordination of these functions is carried out from the Australian Government Crisis Coordination Centre within EMA. The Commonwealth Government Disaster Response Plan (COMDISPLAN) provides the framework for addressing State and Territory requests for Commonwealth physical assistance arising from any type of emergency. The COMDISPLAN is administered by EMA, and is normally activated when Commonwealth assistance for emergency response or short-term recovery is requested, or likely to be requested.
10. After the provision of Commonwealth assistance for a particular emergency is approved by the Attorney General, the Director General of EMA is authorised to activate COMDISPLAN and request appropriate Commonwealth agencies to provide assistance.
11. When a request is received by Defence from EMA, it is normally in the form of an outcome or effect that is being sought. For example, a requested outcome or effect may be to provide accommodation for 500 people, provide fresh water for 1000 people for four weeks, or provide transport for equipment or supplies in response to an unfolding natural disaster. Ideally, the request does not normally seek the provision of a particular asset. Rather, Defence receives a request for the desired effect, reviews what capabilities are available to Defence to achieve that effect and, if available, provides available assets to achieve the effect, such as providing ADF units to support flood relief and recovery efforts. Co-ordination of local emergency response assistance to the States and Territories is often conducted through the Joint Operations Support Staff located in capital cities and where there is a large military presence.
12. When the request for Defence support is received and agreed, CDF issues direction to Defence, primarily Headquarters Joint Operations Command and the three Services (Army, Navy and Air Force) to provide assets. Headquarters Joint Operations Command controls operations, joint exercises and other activities (which include DACC tasks) on behalf of CDF. Joint Operations Command conducts detailed planning to operationalise CDF's direction for execution. Forces are allocated to Headquarters Joint Operations Command by the Services which are then

assigned to a Joint Task Force (JTF). The JTF reports on the conduct of operations to CDF through the Chief of Joint Operations at Headquarters Joint Operations Command.

13. Defence contributes to the annual EMA briefing to the relevant State/Territory emergency response agencies on potential assistance to the States and Territories in the event of a disaster. Defence participated in the EMA briefing provided to the Queensland emergency agencies on 12 November 2010. Requests or inquiries about DACC should be directed to Military Strategic Commitments, Headquarters Joint Operations Command or the regional Joint Operations Support Staff in the first instance.
14. Support provided by the ADF is referred to as Defence Assistance to the Civil Community (DACC). DACC support is grouped into categories, reflecting the extent and duration of the support and the level of Defence authorisation required. Defence DACC categories are explained in Defence Instruction (General) Operations 05-1 DACC (at Annexure KP1). The provision of emergency DACC to State or Territory Governments proceeds (where time permits) only with authorisation from the Minister for Defence or the Chief of the Defence Forces (except for Category 1 assistance).
15. DACC is divided into two classes, emergency and non-emergency, and comprises six categories. It includes Defence assistance to State/Territory Governments, other Government Departments, commercial enterprises, welfare and charitable organisations, community groups and the Australian population at large.
16. Defence becomes involved in the provision of emergency assistance only after State and Territory resources have been exhausted or cannot meet the circumstance of the emergency. Although Defence maintains situational awareness of emergencies and disasters as they unfold, ADF response is not usually pre-emptive, and will be enacted following a request for assistance with the resources available at the time. Defence assistance is generally deployed from within its own resources.
17. The following points are considered by internal approving authorities within Defence when assessing a DACC request (excluding DACC Category 1):
 - 17.1. the responsibility of State, Territory or local Government to provide a response and or resources in the first instance;

- 17.2. the effect on Defence operations, force availability and force preparation commitments and other associated core programs, such as maintenance and supply;
- 17.3. the nature of assistance qualifying as DACC or an alternate type of assistance such as ceremonial activities or Defence Force recruiting which are funded separately;
- 17.4. the full cost and the budgetary effect of providing the support;
- 17.5. the basis and application of cost recovery;
- 17.6. the circumstances in which cost recovery variation or cost recovery waiver may apply;
- 17.7. the protection of the Commonwealth by the provision of indemnity and or insurance against liability for personal injury, death, property loss or damage, or third party claims arising from the execution of the task;
- 17.8. the availability of commercial alternatives to meet the request and the possibility of competing with the private sector, leaving Defence open to criticism;
- 17.9. the possibility that the provision of DACC may be seen as a substitute for the usual avenues of funding or assistance available to non-profit organisations or Government agencies;
- 17.10. the motive of non profit or charitable organisations is not in itself a sufficient reason to provide assistance;
- 17.11. the possibility of establishing a precedence of Defence assistance, which may lead to additional requests for DACC;
- 17.12. the possibility that the provision of DACC may provide unacceptable risk to safety or risk of completion of the task itself; and
- 17.13. the merit of the request for assistance in terms of issues such as community need, urgency, risk to life, property and the risk to the ADF's reputation in not acting.

Emergency DACC

18. Emergency DACC is support provided to the civilian community where immediate action is necessary to save human life or alleviate suffering, prevent extensive loss of animal life, prevent widespread loss/damage to property or to prevent environmental damage, and when

State/Territory resources are inadequate. It also encompasses assistance associated with recovery from a civil emergency or disaster.

19. At the local level, commanders are also able to assist in emergency response. However, each base has differing levels of capability and the response options at each base will vary depending on those capabilities.

Categories of Emergency DACC

20. DACC Category 1 is emergency assistance for a specific task(s) authorised by the Senior ADF Officer (SADFO), Local Unit Commanders, or Administrators, from within their own resources in localised emergency situations. Provision of DACC Category 1 assistance would not normally exceed 24 hours.
21. DACC Category 2 is emergency assistance, beyond that provided under Category 1, during a more extensive or continuing disaster.
22. DACC Category 3 is assistance associated with recovery from a civil emergency or disaster, which is not directly related to the saving of life or property.

Non-emergency DACC

23. Non-emergency DACC involves Defence assistance, of a non-emergency nature, to the Australian community. The scale and scope of assistance can be varied and range from support to events of national significance (for example, Australia Day activities) to support to local fund raising events.

Communications

24. The level of assistance that is required by the civil community will likely determine who is contacted within Defence. All inquiries about DACC, regardless of the category, are often directed to the regional Joint Operations Support Staff, in the first instance, who can provide advice on how a request should proceed.
25. Emergencies, such as the Queensland flood disaster, that fall under DACC Categories 2 or 3 require extensive response or recovery support are referred to EMA. EMA is responsible for planning and coordinating Commonwealth assistance to the States and Territories under the Australian Government Crisis Management Framework.

26. Contact between EMA and Defence occurs regularly within the DACC arrangements. These arrangements serve to complement the COMDISPLAN.
27. Communication will occur by various means best suited to the identified points of contact. Defence has its own communication channels for the Defence point of contact at the site of an incident or in a State/Territory control centre, through to each level of command. Defence has communication channels from its key command locations to EMA. In particular, EMA maintains a permanent liaison officer (LO) within Headquarters Joint Operations Command.
28. Liaison with supported civil agencies during DACC disaster relief operations should, where appropriate and necessary, be conducted through suitably experienced ADF LOs deployed with contingents.

Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST

29. Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST was the codename for the ADF's contribution to the Queensland Government led whole-of-government disaster relief and response to the flood crisis. Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST commenced on 28 December 2010. The number of ADF assets deployed in support of Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST was substantial. Large scale ADF support ceased after about five weeks commensurate with the improved situation on the ground and transition to the long term recovery phase under the Queensland Reconstruction Authority. A timeline of key events can be found at **Annexure KP2**.
30. Defence provided personnel, equipment and maritime assets to Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST under DACC Category 2. Defence committed resources to the Operation as requested by the Queensland Government, while managing existing and potential operational commitments throughout the world. These resources included Reserve personnel, who were utilised throughout the Operation to augment regular Defence personnel. The use of Reservists is, and will continue to be, an important source of capability for the ADF.
31. Defence, in consultation with the State and Commonwealth authorities, employed a robust decision making process to determine the capabilities required for Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST.

Overview of the ADF response to the 2010/11 Queensland Floods

32. On 28 December 2010, the initial ADF response to Queensland Government requests for assistance was through provision of ADF helicopters to assist with emergency evacuation in the vicinity of Theodore.
33. On 31 December 2010, due to the size of the unfolding crisis, a JTF was created to control ADF support to Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) and coordinate further ADF assistance (including aircraft, boats, ground vehicles and personnel) as required. JTF 637, initially led by Colonel Luke Foster, was established on 1 January 2011.
34. As a result of the extent of the flooding, the task force fielded a wide range of capabilities including aviation, engineering, supply, general support and specialist support (detailed below) to conduct crisis response operations in support of the civil authorities.
35. On 17 January 2011, Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST transitioned from a crisis response phase to the recovery phase under the command of Brigadier Paul McLachlan, Commander 7th Brigade. The composition of the JTF also changed over time to ensure the ADF contribution best met the emerging needs of the recovery phase. Defence worked closely with, and in support of, EMQ throughout the evolving crisis.
36. JTF 637 was disestablished on 4 February 2011 with the drawdown of most ADF elements supporting the recovery complete by 5 February 2011. Some specialist ADF elements continued to support the Queensland Government beyond this date under extant DACC arrangements.
37. To assist the Queensland Government, Major General Michael Slater, Commander 1st Division, and a small ADF planning element were released by the Chief of the Defence Force (CDF) to support the Queensland Government flood response and recovery effort as leader of the Queensland Flood Recovery Task Force, later transitioning to the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

Liaison with Queensland Disaster Management Groups or Disaster Coordinators

38. Initial requests for Defence assistance were received through EMA, however once Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST had commenced, the JTF established a direct line with EMQ for receipt of tasks through the deployment of LOs at various levels within the State disaster

management construct. Annexure KP3 illustrates the tasking process, locations of LO and linkages between the civilian and military chain of command.

39. Requests were normally received from the Joint Operations Support Staff LO at the State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) via email. At times, verbal requests were received by deployed commanders from local authorities, but effort was made to have all tasks confirmed with the LO at the SDCC and formal requests subsequently provided.
40. If a subordinate Task Group headquarters was collocated with a District Disaster Coordination Centre (DDCC), or identified tasks were of a critical and/or time sensitive nature, the Task Group had the authority to respond to tasking at this level. An example where this occurred was within the two districts of Ipswich and the Lockyer Valley.
41. The LO network afforded Commander JTF 637 the ability to closely monitor the decision making process within the various organisations and posture in preparation for requests as they developed. The focus was on ensuring the right people, with the appropriate rank/experience were embedded in the right organisations. The JTF embedded LO into the following State and local areas:
 - Headquarters EMQ;
 - Rockhampton City Council;
 - Brisbane City Council;
 - Ipswich City Council;
 - Lockyer Valley Council; and
 - St George Council
42. In addition, Commander JTF 637 was appointed as a member of the State Disaster Management Group, chaired by the Queensland Premier. This provided Defence with excellent visibility of the overall disaster response, and provided the opportunity for the Commander JTF to liaise with the heads of State Government Departments.
43. Additionally, Chief of Staff JTF 637 attended the State Disaster Coordination Committee - one level down from the State Disaster Management Group. This meeting would incorporate all the local district disaster coordinators and discussed issues from the local level. From this meeting a large amount of tasking would be generated for action by EMQ, some of which

would be directed to the ADF. Also attending this meeting was the Joint Operations Support Staff LO, which ensured a regular ADF presence if the Chief of Staff JTF 637 was unable to attend. The Disaster Coordination Committee meetings included teleconferencing, so if key JTF personnel could not be there in person, 'attendance' could still be achieved.

44. In all locations, the ADF used mobile phones to communicate with both Headquarters JTF and local authorities. Military radio communications were also employed by the deployed forces. No significant communication problems were experienced by JTF 637.

Deployment of Assets

45. At the peak of the crisis the following assets were deployed:

- 1976 Defence personnel⁴ (including 131 Navy, 1198 Regular Army, 356 Army Reserve, 266 Air Force, 19 Air Force Reserve and six contractors) from the following units:
 - Army 1st Division elements (troops and vehicles);
 - Army 7th Brigade (which includes 8th/9th Royal Australian Regiment, 7th Combat Services Support Battalion, 6th Battalion Royal Australian Regiment, 139th Signal Squadron, 1st Field Regiment, 2nd Combat Engineer Regiment, 2nd/14th Light Horse Regiment Queensland Mounted Infantry);
 - Army Reserve 2nd Division elements (including 9th Royal Queensland Regiment and 31st/42nd Royal Queensland Regiment);
 - Army 6th Engineer Support Regiment (includes 17th Construction Squadron, 21st Construction Squadron, 1st Topographic Survey Squadron);
 - Army 6th Aviation Regiment;
 - HMA Ships Huon (Coastal Mine Hunter), Leeuwin (Hydrographic Ship), Shepparton and Paluma (Coastal Hydrographic Survey);
 - Navy Aviation Group;
 - Navy clearance divers;
 - Deployable Geo-spatial Survey Team (mapping and image analysis); and

⁴ This number includes only Defence personnel and contractors actually assigned to the JTF. It does not include, for example, additional Defence personnel (including ground crew) who supported the conduct of strategic air lift operations from their home unit locations.

- Air Force Combat Support Group (1st Airfield Defence Squadron), 84 Wing and 86 Wing.
 - 19 helicopters from:
 - Army 6th Aviation Regiment (CH-47 Chinook, S-70A Blackhawk, 206B-1 Kiowa);
 - Navy Aviation Group (S70-B Seahawk, A-109 Augusta and SK-50 Sea King helicopters);
 - seven fixed wing aircraft from Air Force Number 84 Wing (C-130 Hercules and B-350 Super King Air) and 86 Wing (C-17 Globemaster);
 - 17 Army Bushmaster vehicles (protected mobility vehicle – effectively an armoured wheeled troop carrier);
 - numerous trucks; and
 - engineer plant equipment (such as graders, bulldozers, excavators).
46. From 28 December 2010, Defence provided assistance to the following Queensland communities and their surrounding areas: Brisbane, Brisbane River, Bundaberg, Condamine, Dalby, Dirranbandi, Emerald, Gladstone, Grantham, Ipswich, Lockyer Valley, Moreton Bay, Rockhampton, Roma, Somerset, St George, Surat, Theodore, Toowoomba and Townsville. Moree (in NSW) also received support through the provision of 300 camp stretchers to the Moree Evacuation Centre.
47. A brief summary of the total support provided during the operation is as follows:
- fixed wing aircraft flew over 300 hours and helicopters flew over 770 hours;
 - over 738 tonnes of stores were carried and delivered by ADF aircraft;
 - in excess of 2 million litres of water purified and delivered;
 - 831 passengers were carried by ADF fixed wing aircraft; and
 - 933 passengers were carried (which includes rescues) by ADF helicopters.
48. The nature of support provided throughout Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST included:
- **Rotary wing support.** Defence helicopter assistance included air evacuation, search and rescue, aero-medical evacuations, air-lift of food and emergency supplies, tactical

air-lift and support to Queensland government agencies (Police, Coroner and Mortuary).

- **Fixed wing support.** Defence fixed wing aircraft provided strategic air-lift of personnel, food, water and emergency supplies by C-130 Hercules and C-17 Globemaster. It also involved tactical air-lift and aerial imagery collection by B-350 King Air.
- **Engineering support.** Defence engineering assistance included the provision of water purification, engineering advice, earth moving and machinery support for road clearance and rubbish removal, provision of amphibious vehicles for riverine search, as well as engineering inspection of levees, weirs and roads.
- **Supply support.** Supply support included petroleum supply, food resupply by road, general ground transportation, as well as accommodation and rationing for interstate police and emergency services.
- **General support.** General support tasks included road traffic control, ground search and rescue, sandbagging, rubbish removal, door knocking, evacuation and cleaning.
- **Specialist support.** Specialist support included hydrographical survey of the Brisbane River and Moreton Bay, clearance diver inspections of Brisbane River bridges and debris removal in Brisbane waterways, geographical imagery analysis, the provision of environmental health teams, psychological support teams and specialist planning teams to support the Queensland Government led reconstruction effort.

49. The JTF Headquarters and associated JTF was disestablished on 5 February 2011, however the ADF continued to provide ongoing reconstruction and recovery support through DACC Category 2. The enduring commitment was approximately 300 personnel and included an Engineer Task Group, B-350 King Air and an Image Analysis Team. This commitment was progressively drawn down as tasking was completed and the situation on the ground improved.

50. As of 18 February 2011, the Engineer Task Group and B-350 King Air completed all assigned tasking and ceased operations. The Image Analysis Team completed all remaining analysis tasking and ceased operations on 16 March 2011. Command and control of the Queensland flood recovery is now the responsibility of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.

51. Major General Slater, subsequently appointed to the role of chair of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Board on 19 January 2011, a small Defence planning team and several ADF advisors continue to provide support to the Queensland Government. Any future requests for DACC support were made in accordance with extant DACC arrangements through EMA.

ADF's Role in the Recovery of the Rocklea Markets over the period 15 to 20 January 2011

52. Throughout the period 15-20 January 2011, the JTF provided general clean-up support, debris removal and assistance to the recovery effort at the Rocklea Markets (a major food distribution centre) and surrounding urban areas in Brisbane. These tasks were completed according to the priorities set by the Brisbane City Council, in close support of emergency services, and with the assistance of local residents and business owners.
53. Whilst JTF elements were already working in the areas surrounding the Rocklea Markets, the initial request for specific ADF support to the Rocklea Markets was made at approximately 0800 hrs on 15 January 2011. This request was received by a telephone call from the ADF LO within the Brisbane City Council's Office of the Lord Mayor to the JTF Task Group operating in the area. This telephone conversation provided some details of the situation at the Rocklea Markets and a telephone number for the Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Rocklea Markets in order to enable further liaison.
54. The Commander of the Task Group telephoned the CEO of the Rocklea Markets to determine the nature and extent of the task. During the call it was agreed that a force of approximately 20 soldiers would be adequate to complete the requested tasks. Specialist equipment was not requested at the time.
55. The impact of the flooding was such that the Rocklea Markets could not conduct trading. Most, if not all, food holding areas and food stock, machinery and equipment were significantly water damaged. Task Group personnel observed that flood waters had risen to two metres high in most areas of the Rocklea Markets and as high as four metres in other areas of the Market. This inundation was exacerbated by the presence of a significant amount of silt. Water movement within the Markets had dislodged and scattered the produce across many hectares, which had then become mixed with river silt, fuels and oils. All storage, trading and produce handling areas needed to be inspected, cleaned, sanitised and repairs made as necessary.

56. The Platoon Commander assigned to the clean-up task was briefed on the requirement by his Task Group headquarters and deployed from Enoggera within approximately 30 minutes. The Platoon (21 personnel) operated two trucks and one Land Rover as a command vehicle. The Platoon brought brooms, shovels and personal safety equipment to complete the task. Entry to the task area was achieved by a combination of vehicles and foot. Due to the state of the road systems, the Platoon was required to dismount the vehicles and walk approximately nine kilometres to the task site.
57. Upon arrival, the Task Commander was oriented to the ground and the main issues at the task site. A command post, first aid post and stores distribution areas were established concurrent to the commencement of the task.
58. The Platoon assisted the Rocklea Markets Management Group to plan and then coordinate the employment of available resources. Planning and discussions focused on identifying key areas that could be restored in order to permit trading to recommence. The general concept was for the markets to be restored in stages. The Market's trading areas drew the majority of the effort. A step-by-step process was developed, presented to, and endorsed by the Brisbane City Council Health Team. Once each stage was completed, the Brisbane City Council Health Team conducted an inspection and certified the areas of the market as open for trade.
59. The Rocklea Markets Management Group's ability to provide logistic support to the recovery effort was impacted due to the destruction of their warehousing and stores service. Concurrent with cleaning tasks, Platoon logistic staff assisted in operating a logistics supply system and an administration area. This enabled the distribution of supplies such as petrol and other lubricants, safety equipment, sanitation, chemicals and tools permitting uninterrupted activity for the recovery efforts, operation of specialist equipment, and support to tradesmen and market holders. The Platoon first aid post provided support to both military and civilian workers at the site.
60. Focussing on the task and liaison issues, the Platoon was split into two groups, each with integral planning, leadership and transport capabilities. These groups (approximately 10 personnel in each) concentrated on high priority tasks that contributed to restoration of the Market trading areas. The Platoon Commander maintained communication with the local Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) in order to coordinate the use of high pressure water hoses to clean thoroughfares.

61. The response was considered adequate for the task and almost immediate. The response group arrived at the Markets by approx 1100 hrs on 15 January 2011 and were released from the task at approx 1500 hrs on 16 January 2011. Whilst dedicated support to the Markets concluded on 16 January 2011, JTF 637 elements continued to provide support to the suburban areas surrounding the Rocklea Markets.
62. On 20 January 2011, the JTF's role in supporting the clean-up of the suburban areas directly surrounding the Rocklea Markets concluded in close consultation with the Brisbane City Council.

ADF's Role in Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley Region (including Forrest Hill) from 10 January to 15 February 2011

63. There are no standing contingency plans at the local level for Army units (both Australian Regular Army and Army Reserve) in regional Barracks/Depots in the vicinity of Toowoomba to provide assistance, except for the provision of support to DACC Category 1 tasks (eg, saving immediate life). As JTF 637 was established prior to the flash flooding event that occurred in Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley region on 10 January 2011, support was provided under DACC Category 2 via direct requests from the SDCC.
64. The JTF's General Support Task Group provided the focus of the efforts within the Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley regions, supported by helicopter and fixed wing aircraft during the initial search and rescue response. On conclusion of the search and rescue efforts, as the labour intensive duties of cleaning and rubbish disposal became the priority, the General Support Task Group remained to assist. When labour intensive tasks were completed, the General Support Task Group was drawn down and the JTF priority shifted to the Engineer Task Group who provided the heavy plant support and engineer advice to the Brisbane City Council and Ipswich City Council. Throughout the transition from general support to engineer tasks the supporting effort was commensurately drawn down with personnel returning to their parent units.
65. Initial requests for assistance during this period were received by the JTF from the SDCC which resulted in the deployment of the forces mentioned above. Once in location, the Task Group Commander liaised directly with the Local Disaster Management Group or District Disaster Coordinator (in this case a Queensland Police Service Officer) through the deployed JTF LO for specific tasks. When these tasks appeared outside the guidance provided to the Task Group

Commander, the Task Group sought clarification from HQ JTF 637 or passed the request to the JTF headquarters which was then passed to the JTF LO at the SDCC for clarification and prioritisation.

66. **10 January 2011.** JTF 637 received initial warning of possible support tasks in the vicinity of Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley on the afternoon of 10 January 2011 (approx 1600 hrs local time). Late in the afternoon, as events in the Toowoomba region deteriorated, Commander JTF 637 directed two SK-50 Sea Kings to reposition from Roma to RAAF Base Amberley at first light on 11 January 2011 in order to support likely response efforts. In support of the emerging threat in south east Queensland, an additional two S-70 Blackhawks were also assigned to JTF 637. These helicopters were placed on 2 hrs notice to move from 0600 hrs local time on 11 January 2011. EMQ advised that the priority task for early 11 January 2011 was a search of creek lines / rivers and isolated properties to the east and west of Toowoomba. JTF 637 also received a request to provide aviation fuel to civilian helicopters at RAAF Base Amberley conducting searches, which was approved to commence on the morning of 11 January 2011.
67. **11 January 2011.** ADF helicopters operated in extremely adverse conditions throughout most of the day evacuating over 400 people from the Lockyer Valley. In accordance with Commander JTF instructions on 10 January 2011, two SK-50 Sea Kings departed Roma at 0730 hrs and landed at Oakey by 0910 hrs. The Sea Kings then launched from Oakey and crossed the range to operate in the Lockyer Valley along with the two S-70A Blackhawks (force assigned on 10 January 2011) to assist in evacuation operations in the Lockyer Valley. Due to adverse weather and a fire warning light in one of the Sea Kings that required technical inspection, helicopter operations were initially delayed, however 158 civilians were evacuated and one winch rescue of a person trapped in flood water was conducted prior to last light that day in the Lockyer Valley and Toowoomba regions. Army trucks evacuated 75 civilians from Laidley Hospital to Plainland Hotel on the Warrego Highway. The two S-70A Blackhawks deployed from Oakey to Amberley and commenced search and rescue operations in vicinity of Forest Hill within the Lockyer Valley at first light. The Blackhawks transported 259 civilians in support of evacuation operations between Forest Hill and Gatton. They also completed 24 hoist recoveries
68. **12 January 2011.** At approximately 1530 hrs, HQ JTF 637 received a request from SDCC to assist with subsequent search operations in the Lockyer Valley. The operations staff at JTF 637

headquarters liaised directly with the Toowoomba Major Incident Room and the Queensland Police Service Search Coordinator to scope the support requirements. The task was formally accepted at approximately 1700 hrs. A Motorised Company from 8/9 RAR (the Emergency Support Force – approximately 120 personnel) was force assigned to JTF 637 at 1700 hrs to assist with this task. The Emergency Support Force deployed to Amberley on the night of 12/13 January 2011 in order to arrive at Grantham at approximately first light on 13 January 2011. JTF helicopters supported search and rescue tasks and transport of civilian emergency services personnel (police, health, essential services) to remote areas to conduct tasks throughout the period 12-17 January 2011

69. **13 January 2011.** The Emergency Support Force Company concentrated at Grantham at approximately 0700 hrs on 13 January 2011 in order to finalise planning prior to commencing search operations with the Queensland Police Services in the Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba Range and Murphy's Creek. The Emergency Support Force liaised with JTF 637 headquarters to coordinate helicopter support directly from Grantham. Defence water trucks commenced the distribution of drinking water throughout the Lockyer Valley. Search operations using helicopters (Sea King, Blackhawk and Kiowa), dismounted personnel and Bushmaster vehicles commenced mid-morning. Helicopters also conducted aerial photography.
70. **13-16 January 2011.** JTF assets conducted bulk water distribution (approximately one million litres) within the Lockyer Valley region.
71. **14 January 2011.** At 0835 hrs, JTF 637 headquarters received a request from the SDCC for a further 150 personnel to assist in the search and recovery operation in the Lockyer Valley due to difficult terrain disrupting search efforts in remote areas. An additional three Platoons (approximately 30 soldiers in each Platoon) from 6th Engineer Support Regiment (6 ESR) were subsequently allocated to reinforce the JTF search operations in conjunction with the Queensland Police Services. JTF helicopters transported a State coronial party from Toowoomba around the Grantham area.
72. **15 January 2011.** The three Platoons from 6 ESR allocated to the search and recovery task deployed to the Lockyer Valley at 0800 hrs. The three Platoons arrived at Grantham at approximately 1100 hrs to commence tasking.

73. **16 January 2011.** The JTF received a request from the Toowoomba District Disaster Coordinator (through the SDCC) for ADF support to conduct clean-up of the Lockyer Valley region on completion of search operations.
74. **16-17 January 2011.** JTF forces deployed within the Lockyer Valley (including Grantham) were progressively reinforced with additional personnel and equipment to assist search, clearance and general clean-up tasks.
75. **20 January 2011.** ADF forces in Grantham were further reinforced with additional personnel and heavy engineer equipment to support general clean-up within the Lockyer Valley.
76. **20 January – 04 February 2011.** The JTF supported repatriation of Grantham and Lockyer Valley residents into their homes. The JTF continued to assist in the clean-up of the townships, residences and critical infrastructure of Grantham, the Lockyer Valley and surrounding areas continued. The bulk of the clean-up effort was focussed on the Grantham area, but as more tasks were identified in the wider Lockyer Valley region (such as Murphy's Creek), JTF elements responded to conduct these tasks. JTF personnel, in conjunction with the Queensland Police Services, supported targeted search activity around the Lockyer Valley and Grantham regions, including Queensland Police recovery tasks in the vicinity of Helidon and Murphy's Creek, as well as between Gatton and Lowood.
77. **04-09 February 2011.** An Army Survey Team assisted the Lockyer Valley Regional Council with drainage rectification survey work within Forrest Hill township.
78. **04-10 February 2011.** JTF personnel assisted with debris removal from the Lowood, Somerset Council area.
79. **05-14 February 2011.** The JTF provided general clean-up and clearance of large scale debris (predominantly through the use of engineer plant equipment) within the Murphy's Creek and Helidon areas.
80. **08 February 2011.** The JTF's role in providing support to the Grantham area concluded in close consultation with the local council.
81. **15 February 2011.** All JTF elements completed tasking within the Lockyer Valley region.

ADF's Role in Oakey

82. Defence has helicopters permanently based at Oakey with the Army Aviation Training Centre. During the response and recovery phases, Oakey predominantly served as a base for helicopter operations that supported JTF 637. Additional helicopter assets deployed to Oakey at first light on 11 January 2011 to support the developing situation in the Toowoomba region.

ADF's Role in the Western Downs from 28 December 2010 to 21 January 2011

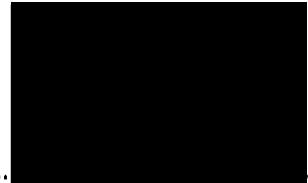
83. **28-30 December 2010.** ADF helicopters assisted civilian emergency services in the evacuation of residents from Condamine. This support was conducted in the initial stages of the evolving disaster at the request of the Queensland Government through EMA.
84. **7 January 2011.** JTF 637 helicopters transported Power-Link staff from Oakey to Braemar to effect repairs on electricity substations.
85. **17 January 2011.** Defence representatives from JTF 637 attended an EMQ meeting regarding the reoccupation of Condamine. Defence transported tradesmen into Condamine to restore essential services.
86. **18 January 2011.** JTF helicopters and ground vehicles supported repatriation of Condamine residents back into the township. The JTF helicopters also assisted in the delivery of temporary tent accommodation (flexible habitat shelters owned by Queensland Fire and Rescue Services) to provide emergency accommodation for the residents of Condamine.
87. **19-20 January 2011.** JTF elements supported the repatriation of Condamine residents, and established a water purification point to provide fresh water to the town. The JTF also supported the clean-up of the township, residences and critical infrastructure (including roads and farms).
88. **21 January 2011.** The JTF's role in providing support to the Condamine area concluded as all allocated tasks had been completed.

Other matters

89. During the operation there were environmental hazards present that posed a risk to ADF personnel. These hazards included asbestos and photovoltaic arrays or solar electrical generation cells within damaged structures. Direction (eg, use of personal protective equipment and instructions on avoidance of clearing hazardous materials) was provided to

deployed Task Groups regarding occupational health and safety once these risks were identified to minimise exposure or injury to ADF personnel assisting the recovery efforts.

Date: 10 MAY 11

A large black rectangular box redacting the signature of Kevin John Paule.

Kevin John Paule

In the matter of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950*

Commissions of Inquiry Order (No.1) 2011

Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

First Witness Statement of Kevin Paule

Annexure 'KP1'

Defence Instruction (General) Operations 05-1 DACC

In the matter of the *Commissions of Inquiry Act 1950*

Commissions of Inquiry Order (No.1) 2011

Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

First Witness Statement of Kevin Paule

Annexure 'KP2'

ADF support - Timeline of key events

- 26 December 2010:
 - ADF Joint Operation Support Staff Liaison Officer (LO) located in State Disaster Coordination Centre (SDCC) Brisbane and Disaster Coordination Centre in Rockhampton commenced daily liaison to scope possible DACC requests.
- 28 December 2010:
 - The Queensland Government, through EMA, requested emergency ADF support to evacuate residents from the vicinity of Theodore to Moura.
 - One Army S-70A Blackhawk was reacted and assisted the evacuation of 314 personnel.
 - Two further S-70A Blackhawks were reacted late on 28 December 2010 to conduct evacuations (inclusive of medical evacuations and emergency resupply of food and medical stores to isolated communities).
- 29 December 2010:
 - The three S-70A Blackhawks continued to conduct food and supply sorties/air drops in the vicinity of Theodore and isolated communities in the vicinity of Thangool.
 - EMA requested additional helicopter support in other flood affected areas of Queensland, including Rockhampton and Emerald.
- 30 December 2010:
 - Three S-70A Blackhawks delivered 2.5 tonnes of foodstuffs to Taroom and Thangool areas.
 - Three S-70A Blackhawks also assisted with evacuations from Emerald.
 - Two additional S-70A Blackhawks were provided to evacuate 86 residents from Condamine to Dalby.
- 31 December 2010:
 - One RAAF C-130 Hercules conducted two sorties from Amberley to Emerald to deliver temporary tent accommodation (flexible habitat) for evacuees.
 - Three S-70A Blackhawks delivered 33 tonnes of stores/food and 800 litres of milk to Emerald.
 - As the crisis escalated, CDF directed the ADF to posture accordingly and raised a JTF to control ADF support to the Queensland Emergency Services and coordinate further ADF support to the evolving crisis.
 - At about 1400 hrs, the CDF Execution Order was released for the creation of JTF 637. This JTF initially consisted of the following Task Groups:
 - Headquarters JTF 637 (which included an LO network and forward headquarters);
 - Rotary Wing Task Group (Blackhawk helicopters);
 - Air Component Task Group (fixed wing strategic lift assets included B-350 King Air and C-130 Hercules); and
 - Navy Rotary Wing Task Group (Sea King helicopters).

- 31 December 2010 to 03 January 2011:
 - S-70A Blackhawks continued rescue and relief operations in Emerald including:
 - 56 people evacuated from Emerald Hospital.
 - 42 tonnes of food delivered to isolated areas.
 - 2.5 tonnes of sand delivered (used to reinforce a dam).
 - 8 tonnes of temporary tent accommodation (flexible habitat) relocated for evacuees.
 - medical supplies delivered.
 - repatriation of two bodies (under the guidance of Queensland Police).
- 01 January 2011:
 - JTF 637, established under Colonel Luke Foster, Chief of Staff 1st Division Headquarters, assumed responsibility for the ADF response and support to civilian authorities. The initial strength of the JTF was 114 personnel⁵.
 - The JTF co-located a liaison and planning team within Emergency Management Queensland (EMQ) headquarters to support relief activities.
 - Headquarters JTF 637 established at Enoggera. Joint Operations Support Staff LOs were allocated to the JTF to facilitate liaison between the SDCC and JTF 637 headquarters.
 - CDF directed planning for a more expansive ADF assistance package, with the potential for more helicopters, aircraft and ADF units, as the situation demands.
 - Commander JTF 637 commenced daily attendance at State Disaster Management Group / SDCC meetings.
- 02 January 2011:
 - A JTF forward headquarters element was deployed to Rockhampton to enable direct liaison with the Disaster Coordination Centre regarding flooding events in central Queensland. This area was the JTF main effort at the time.
 - Contingency planning was conducted by the JTF headquarters to employ C-130 to conduct daily resupply of up to 50 tons of foodstuffs to Mackay for forwarding by road to Rockhampton by civil contractors.
- 03 January 2011:
 - The JTF forward headquarters (deployed on 2 January 2011) was established in Rockhampton and commenced liaison with Disaster Coordination Centre and local emergency services.
 - The forward headquarters commenced liaison with Local Disaster Management Committee at Roma via telecon regarding the situation and possible support requirements to St George/Surat region.
 - Two pallets of dry food, insect repellent, batteries and torches dropped to properties in vicinity of Emerald by three S-70 Blackhawks.
 - A C-130 delivered 17 tonnes of dry goods to Mackay.

⁵ The personnel numbers within this Annexure include only Defence personnel and contractors actually assigned to the JTF. It does not include, for example, additional Defence personnel (including ground crew) who supported the conduct of strategic air lift operations from their home unit locations.

- Situation in Emerald improves; S-70A Blackhawks relocate to Rockhampton to support further rescue and relief operations.
- JTF 637 commenced engagement with NSW Emergency Services to monitor potential requirement for ADF support in the northern NSW region around Goodooga.
- 03-05 January 2011:
 - A RAAF C-130 Hercules delivered approx 130 tonnes of essential non-perishable supplies (long-life milk, bottled water, canned food) in sorties to Mackay.
- 04 January 2011:
 - JTF 637 comprised approximately 115 personnel.
 - First CDF Amplification Order released to assign additional assets (including Navy helicopters) to JTF 637.
 - A C-130 delivered approximately 43 tonnes of dry goods to Mackay.
 - A Blackhawk helicopter conducted an evacuation of a sick child from Gracemere to Rockhampton.
 - JTF 637 commenced engagement and monitoring of the flood situation in NSW.
- 05 January 2011:
 - Second CDF Amplification Order released to assign additional fixed wing aircraft to JTF 637.
 - A C-130 delivered an additional 44 tonnes of dry goods to Mackay.
 - The two SK-50 Sea King helicopters in Roma provided evacuation and relief support to areas surrounding Surat and St George.
 - A Blackhawk helicopter evacuated two children, their mothers and a doctor from Gracemere to Rockhampton.
 - Major General Slater, Commander 1st Division, released by CDF to support the Queensland flood recovery effort as leader of the Queensland Recovery Task Force. A small ADF planning team was also released to support Major General Slater.
- 06 January 2011:
 - The SK-50 Detachment Commander conducted liaison with the Mayor of St George, Senior Queensland Police Services and Local Disaster Management Committee staff on provision of support using Defence helicopters.
 - A C-130 Hercules delivered two Army LOs and an Air Load Team from RAAF Base Amberley to St George to support the Sea King operations and the movement of any humanitarian stores. The C-130 was struck by lightning on the return trip from St George to Amberley. It landed safely and was immediately replaced by a second aircraft to continue to support to the floods.
 - One Army LO remained in St George to liaise with the Disaster Coordination Centre and the other LO was transported to Roma to liaise with the Roma Disaster Management Committee.
 - The replacement C-130 transported 10,000 sandbags and an Army Petroleum Detachment to St George.

- A CH-47 Chinook helicopter transported an ADF water purification unit from Rockhampton to Theodore in preparation to provide drinking water to Theodore residents.
- 07 January 2011:
 - A C-130 Hercules delivered 12,000 litres of aviation fuel to St George to support helicopter operations.
 - Two SK-50 Sea King helicopters conducted reconnaissance flights from Roma to St George and transported Power-Link staff from Oakey to Braemar to effect repairs on electricity substations.
 - An S-70A Blackhawk helicopter conducted medical evacuation of an 81 year old cardiac patient from Gracemere to Rockhampton.
 - An S-70A Blackhawk helicopter delivered 350 kg of bedding to Theodore Hospital.
- 08 January 2011:
 - A C-130 Hercules transported Queensland Fire and Rescue Services flexible habitat shelters (tents) from Roma to St George.
 - The water purification unit commenced supply of water to Theodore.
 - JTF 637 comprised of approximately 115 personnel spread from Brisbane to St George.
- 09-13 January 2011:
 - Purified water provided to Theodore.
- 09-14 January 2011:
 - ADF assets currently assigned to JTF 637 continue to focus efforts in the Rockhampton, St George and Toowoomba/Lockyer Valley⁶ regions.
- 10 January 2011:
 - Aviation LO deployed to the Incident Response Room at Toowoomba as situation in vicinity of Toowoomba deteriorated.
 - A Blackhawk conducted an emergency evacuation of one person from a mine site near Biloela to Rockhampton.
- 11 January 2011:
 - Army given a warning order to provide additional assets, including specialist engineering capability.
 - Aviation fuel from RAAF Base Amberley was provided to civilian helicopters conducting search operations in Lockyer Valley.
- 12 January 2011:
 - JTF 637 comprised of approximately 370 personnel.
 - Third CDF Amplification Order released to assign additional aircraft and ground liaison assets to JTF 637.

⁶ A breakdown of the Defence effort focused in Toowoomba and the Lockyer Valley during the period 10 January to 15 February is covered in greater detail in the main witness statement commencing at paragraph 63.

- LO established at Queensland Police Services Major Incident Room in Brisbane to assist in coordination of local support requests associated with flooding in Brisbane City.
- At approximately 1530 hrs, JTF 637 headquarters received an informal request from SDCC to assist with the search operations in the Lockyer Valley. HQ JTF 637 liaised directly with the Toowoomba Major Incident Room and the Queensland Police Services Search Coordinator to scope the support requirements.
- Navy clearance diving team arrive in Brisbane to commence search and clearance of the Brisbane River.
- Personnel assisted in filling and laying sandbags in Brisbane and the surrounding suburbs to protect critical electrical infrastructure.
- A C-130 transported 300 stretchers transported from Richmond to Moree.
- Premier Bligh made additional requests to the Prime Minister for Defence assistance, including transporting search and recovery teams to remote localities and additional resources to assist in the clean-up. Premier Bligh indicated that further Defence support could be required to assist Queensland emergency agencies, engineering assessment and construction, psychological support and water purification.
- 12-17 January 2011:
 - Aviation fuel provided to Queensland Police Services helicopter operations from St George.
- 13 January 2011:
 - ADF was providing 19 helicopters (combination of Blackhawk, Sea King, Kiowa, Augusta and Chinook), seven fixed wing aircraft (combination of King Air, Hercules and Globemaster) and approximately 540 personnel.
 - LO established with local Queensland Police Services in Toowoomba to assist Local Disaster Coordination Centre.
 - A C-17 transported two Light Amphibious Resupply Craft (LARC) from Townsville to Amberley for potential use in the Lockyer Valley.
 - ADF relief efforts were focused in the Lockyer Valley and Brisbane regions as follows:
 - A Task Group concentrated at Grantham early morning in order to finalise planning and preparation prior to commencing search operations with Queensland Police Services in Lockyer Valley, Toowoomba Range and Murphy's Creek. The Task Group liaised directly with the Queensland Police Services Search Coordinator located at Grantham in order to coordinate the ADF support to search and recovery operations. Search operations, using Defence helicopters, dismounted personnel and Bushmasters commenced mid-morning.
 - The supply of critical bulk water by two Mack Water Trucks in the Lockyer Valley commenced.
 - Navy clearance divers commenced operations in the Brisbane River assessing moorings and identifying underwater obstacles.
 - A sea anchor for the Moggill Ferry was transported and positioned by Blackhawk.

- Two C-17 Globemasters delivered 176 tonnes of dry goods to Townsville to be forwarded to the disaster area, whilst C-130s delivered 13 tonnes of dry goods and a forklift to Bundaberg.
- JTF 637 was advised by NSW Emergency Services that flooding in northern NSW is manageable and within their capabilities. Engagement continued as well as monitoring the levees in Goondiwindi.
- 14 January 2011:
 - Size of the JTF grew to approximately 1200 personnel, including 19 helicopters, three assigned fixed wing aircraft and four additional fixed wing aircraft on standby for tasking.
 - JTF 637 continued to conduct search and recovery, logistics resupply, transportation (including deceased persons), general support (sandbagging/clean-up) and evacuation operations throughout all areas.
 - Bulk water supply to Lockyer Valley by two Mack Water Trucks continued.
 - A CH-47 Chinook helicopter delivered 17 pallets of food to Mt Crosby.
 - Following the request by Premier Bligh for 'minesweepers' to clear Moreton Bay and the Brisbane River, the Royal Australian Navy began deploying a Mine Counter Measure Task Group (4-5 days sailing time to be in the area of operations).
 - Defence provided accommodation and rationing for 120 NSW Firemen at Gallipoli Barracks.
 - Water Purification Unit ceased supplying water in Theodore as local water pumps had been repaired and resupply was no longer required.
 - Approximately 133 tonnes of dry goods, food stuffs and medical supplies were delivered to Bundaberg and Charleville by two C-130s and to Townsville by a C-17.
 - In response to Premier Bligh's request of 12 January, expansion of the JTF into five task groups was planned to support the restoration phase; comprising of a General Support Task Group, Engineer Task Group, Aviation Task Group, Logistic Support Task Group and a Specialist Support Task Group.
 - Monitoring of the Goondiwindi levee continued.
- 15 January 2011:
 - Size of the JTF grew to approximately 1450 personnel.
 - JTF 637 focus, whilst some search and recovery still continued, commenced transition from response to recovery. Ongoing tasks included logistics resupply, transportation (including deceased persons) and general support (clean-up, debris removal and restoration) throughout all areas.
 - Bulk water supply to Lockyer Valley by two Mack Water Trucks continued.
 - JTF 637 commenced support to clean-up and recovery of Rocklea Markets⁷.
 - One Blackhawk conducted a food drop in vicinity of Cecil Plains.
 - A C-17 delivered a resupply of 107 tonnes of foodstuffs and essential goods to Townsville.

⁷ A breakdown of the Defence effort focused in Rocklea Markets during the period 15 to 20 January is covered in greater detail in the main witness statement commencing at paragraph 52.

- Engineers began assessing levees and infrastructure (Dirranbandi).
- Monitoring of the Goondiwindi levee continued.
- 16 January 2011:
 - Size of the JTF grew to approximately 1530 personnel.
 - The supply of bulk water to Lockyer Valley by Mack Water Trucks ceased.
 - Continuation of cleaning operations of communities, main supply routes and vital assets. Key areas included Rocklea Markets, Brisbane Western Suburbs, Karalee (North Ipswich) and the Lockyer Valley.
- 17 January 2011:
 - Brigadier Paul McLachlan, Commander 7th Brigade, assumed command of JTF 637.
 - Due to the improving flood situation, Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST commenced transition from a crisis response to the recovery.
 - JTF 637 had an approximate strength of 1650 personnel.
 - Helicopters provided support to Water Police searches along the Brisbane River to Wivenhoe Dam.
 - Engineer Task Group conducted reconnaissance of suburban areas of Brisbane and Ipswich, including preparations for an inspection of the Gateway Bridge.
 - A Sea King helicopter delivered two civilian medical personnel and medical supplies to the Gatton area.
 - A CH-47 Chinook delivered 13 tonnes of food and supplies to Dirranbandi.
- 18 January 2011:
 - JTF 637 had an approximate strength of 1880 personnel.
 - Key tasks included provision of fixed and rotary wing support, engineering support, supply support, general support and specialist support to the recovery efforts.
 - HMAS HUON (Mine Hunter), the first ship of the Maritime Mine Counter Measure Task Group, arrived Brisbane to commence clearance of Moreton Bay and Brisbane River.
 - A C-17 transported 50 sailors and 14 clearance divers with equipment from Sydney to Amberley.
- 19 January 2011:
 - JTF 637 had a strength of 1976 personnel (peak manning for Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST).
 - Key tasks included continued provision of fixed and rotary wing support, engineering support, supply support, general support and specialist support to the recovery efforts.
 - Remainder of Maritime Mine Counter Measure Task Group (HMA Ships PALUMA and SHEPPARTON) arrived at Brisbane to commence clearance of Moreton Bay and Brisbane River.
 - Debris clearance activity continued: Chelmer, Graceville, Yeronga, Fairfield, Karalee, Kenmore, St Lucia, Brassall, Booval, Goodna, and Grantham.

- A CH-47 Chinook transported personnel, stores (including the Queensland Fire and Rescue flexible habitat) and equipment to Condamine.
- Premier Anna Bligh announced the establishment of a new Queensland Reconstruction Authority and that Major General Slater would chair the Queensland Reconstruction Authority Board.
- 20 January 2011:
 - The Maritime Task Group continued surveys in the Brisbane River and Moreton Bay shipping channels (through until 3 February).
 - Navy clearance divers conducted operations near the Gateway Bridge.
 - JTF elements supported the repatriation of Condamine residents and established a water purification point to provide fresh water.
 - JTF 637 began to commence a gradual draw down of personnel as the number of support tasks reduced.
 - JTF 637 had reduced in strength to approximately 1900 personnel.
- 20-31 January 2011:
 - The JTF continued the draw down of personnel and Defence capabilities allocated to support the recovery phase of Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST through out the latter half of January.
 - Key tasks included continued provision of fixed and rotary wing support, engineering support, supply support, general support and specialist support to the recovery efforts. Significant tasks completed over this period included:
 - JTF Task Groups continued engineering and general clean-up tasks across Brisbane and the south east.
 - Clearance diver teams conducted search and clearance of the Brisbane River.
 - Maritime Task Group completed detailed survey and clearance of the Moreton Bay shipping channels, anchorages and approaches.
 - A water purification unit provided clean water to the residents of Condamine.
 - Engineering clean-up tasks focused on Helidon, Grantham and Murphy's Creek. Support was provided to the Queensland Police for missing persons search and removal of bulk debris was conducted.
 - An Environmental Health Team provided insect spraying in Grantham, Ipswich, Esk and the Lockyer Valley.
- 24 January 2011:
 - Two S-70B Seahawk helicopters were redirected from the Queensland recovery efforts to DACC Category 2 assistance to the Victorian floods recovery effort.
- 27 January 2011:
 - Rotary Wing Task Group stood down from support to JTF 637. During the Queensland flood crisis, the task group logged 773 air hours.

- 28 January 2011:
 - CDF Execution Order released requesting nominations from the three Services for ADF LOs to be seconded into selected Queensland Councils to provide planning expertise to support the recovery efforts.
- 31 January 2011:
 - Fourth CDF Amplification Order released to prepare the JTF for disestablishment and transition to enduring support under DACC Category 2 arrangements.
 - JTF 637 had reduced in strength to approximately 800 personnel.
- 01 February 2011:
 - JTF 637 had reduced in strength to approximately 730 personnel.
 - Strategic lift assets on standby for support to Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST were redirected to conduct evacuation of 183 patients and staff from Cairns Base Hospital in preparation for the arrival of Tropical Cyclone Yasi.
- 02 February 2011:
 - JTF 637 had reduced in strength to approximately 720 personnel.
 - Reconnaissance teams were sent into the Somerset regions to determine the scope of future support tasks.
- 03 February 2011:
 - Maritime Task Group stood down from support to JTF 637 after completing the search and clearance of Brisbane River and Moreton Bay.
- 04 February 2011:
 - CDF Cease Order released to disestablish JTF 637.
 - ADF continued to perform general clean-up, aerial survey and image analysis tasks in support of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority using forces already assigned to Operation QUEENSLAND FLOOD ASSIST under DACC Category 2 arrangements.
 - Ongoing support was provided by an Engineer Task Group, supported by a RAAF King Air aircraft, initially consisting of approximately 400 personnel.
- 05-17 February 2011:
 - Engineer Task Group continued to provide engineering, supply and general support to the reconstruction and recovery efforts. Significant tasks included:
 - Electrical works in Ipswich.
 - Survey team assisting the Lockyer Valley Regional Council with drainage rectification works in Forest Hill.
 - Support to Queensland Police Services.
 - Support to the Lockyer Valley Regional Council with debris removal, drainage rectification and demolition of structurally unsound houses.
 - Recovery tasks in Grantham, Helidon and Murphy's Creek ranging from re-opening of isolated property access roads to bulk silt/debris removal from properties.

- Debris removal at Lowood in support of Somerset Council.
- Reconnaissance teams deployed into the Somerset region to assist the Council and Emergency Services to complete damage surveys.
- Aerial imagery of the flood affected areas.
- As the number of tasks required to be completed continued to reduce, the Engineer Task Group continued a progressive draw down of personnel and specialist equipment.
- 09 February 2011:
 - CDF Amplification Order released to second an ADF Advisor to a selected Queensland Council to support the reconstruction and recovery effort under the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.
- 18 February 2011:
 - The Engineer Task Group and King Air ceased operations in support of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.
 - An Imagery Analysis Team continued to conduct analysis of captured images in support of the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.
- 24 February 2011:
 - Second CDF Amplification Order released to second an ADF Advisor to a selected Queensland Council to support the reconstruction and recovery effort under the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.
- 10 March 2011:
 - Third CDF Amplification Order released to second an ADF Advisor to a selected Queensland Council to support the reconstruction and recovery effort under the Queensland Reconstruction Authority.
- 16 March 2011:
 - Image Analysis Team completed image analysis tasking.
 - All Defence support ceased to the Queensland flood crisis, outside of Major General Slater, his administrative planning team and the ADF Advisors.

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First Witness Statement of Kevin Paule

Annexure 'KP3'

