On 2011 January 10-11th Floods of Oakey and the 
Cooby's creek systems.

In the past, by older fathers recollections Oakey did not 
have a serious flood problem until the Cooby Dam 
overflowed. The creek systems, Doolee swamp and 
Oakey lagoon would fill, but no real damaging 
occurred, and no houses or businesses were built in the 
danger area.

Only when the major creek systems, namely Oakey 
Doctors Creek, Diringandan, German, Goowers 
Wellstock all had heavy rain and the Dam 
overflowed was there major flooding as in July 1969 

It is reported that Cooby Dam catches 35% of the 
water, leaving 65% to flow freely and to fill the creeks 
and the flood plains before reaching Oakey. So water 
flow through Oakey. But when the Dam is full the system 
gets the full 100% of the water.

Ever since the Cooby Dam was built and the 
telephones were reliable, when it rained 3 inches or more, 
or as soon as the Dam was full the Dam Ranger would 
2 or 3 Farmers down stream and they in turn would 
ring father down stream and their neighbours until 
the message got to all farmers that maybe affected.

The messages would be at 2:6:10:14 inches (4:15:30 cm) 
etc. to give an idea of the flood plain depth. But now 
with the widening of the spillway we need to be told 
the extra amount of water that will come at these 
heights, or get warnings at shorter heights.

When we get the warnings I would also ring the 
Oakey Police and the S.W.S. as well as neighbours.

It has been tried several times in Small and
large flows the time from the dam to the floodline at the lower end of the farm is 5-7 hours and take to Oaky is 5-7 hours depend on the amount of flow. This 10-14 hours from the time to Oaky.

This gives plenty of time to for most farmers to move livestock, animals and birds to safer places, turn off and remove fuses from electrical switch boxes, move engines, irrigation systems, electric fencing, and other farming gear above flood height. The height depends on the amount of water over the spillway.

The 10-14 hours notice to Oaky gives ample time for people to, if belonging, move animals, and cows to higher, safer places and to evacuate themselves, if necessary.

This time, there was no warning and no knowledge of the alteration to the main spillway, so unable to give any useful warning to the police or any neighbours until the water was rising to flood height here.

The Oaky Police just rang me about 10.00 am thinking I was still the controller of the Oaky S.T.S. I gave them the phone number of Oaky S.T.S. members and went to check the creek. It was up about 10 cm from local run-off only. I rang the police, who pointed here indicated minor flooding and still rising and again later about 4.15 PM. The water was nearly 1953 level and still rising.

I only got through to Oaky Police with the worst warning all other warnings were diverted at no time could I contact the Oaky S.T.S. or Council office.

The lack of these warnings has the combined loss of livestock and equipment that could have been shifted is several $100 000 dollars worth.
along with the loss of fences, buildings, and equipment that could not be protected.

Since 1993 a lot of alterations have been made to the Railway Drainage by removing pine and cattle vats, and narrowing the water flow at the Oaky and Doctors Creek crossings, maybe made the line stronger for coal cartage but it is now a dam wall from Kingsford to Jondaryan with only 2 limited outlets.

The bypass is also a dam wall with limited outlets.

The railway was the major cause of the flooding on the northern side of town with water in nearly all properties and most houses, especially the semi-on slabs. It also backed up the Doctors creek as far as 550 Kingsford/Silverleigh Rd and flooded the Oaky Creek there.

The Gourie-Westbrook creeks are steeper sided with little flood plains and are shorter so peak at Oaky carry after storms but in long time rains as in deep lows. Cyclones as in 1974 Gourie will fill the north side of Oaky through the bypass leaving the Oaky creek nowhere to go except up then through floods both sides of the rail line and bypass.

The Jondaryan Council started to make/ build a measuring station on our farm but it was never finished. I would be happy to continue to do the monitoring.

I would suggest another site on the Doctors Creek at Fred Sharps near the bore water. No more beaks or higher up the creek.
Improvements.
Extra pipe/drainage under the road line between Kingsgrove and Pendanyan, widening the space under the Pendanyan rail bridge and road bridge.
Raising and widening the space under the bridge in Oaky to the same capacity as the rail bridge with a by-path of land, if necessary.
Stop permitting houses and businesses to build below the natural creek bank line, for example G, CWA. Nursing home, CWA Units and several other houses in Creek and Cherry streets, Cawst, Kent St etc, as well as in known areas as Oakyagoon bounded by Tool, Caw and Cunningham.
Set-up creek reading stations on Oaky, Bokor and Cawra and Westbrook creek upstream from Oaky.
It could be useful to have satellite reading stations near Highfields, Scham, Cawra West and Barrenso as to have an idea of the amount of water that major creek down.
Review the country disaster plan and all the major units know what is expected of them and to give them a paper copy, as computers are useless in black outs or you are not at B.G.
Warning systems.
Until some other reliable warning system may be devised PLEASE use the old landline phone system from the Dam, as mobile phones, reception, tower, and satellite is unreliable in the upper reaches of these creeks.