



QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE
STATEMENT OF WITNESS



Occurrence #: _____

Statement no.: 1 Date: 30/01/2011

Statement of

Name of witness: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

Date of birth: [REDACTED] Age: [REDACTED] Occupation: Disability Pensioner

Police officer taking statement

Name: ROLPH, Shayne Gerard

Rank: Detective Senior Constable Reg. no.: 14007

Region/Command/Division: Southern Region Station: Taskforce Galaxy

Statement:

Daniel Brian WATKINS states:

1. My full name is Daniel Brian WATKINS. I currently reside at [REDACTED] Grantham with my wife Sharon Elizabeth WATKINS [REDACTED] and my daughter Claire Robin WATKINS [REDACTED]
2. My home phone number is [REDACTED] and my mobile phone number is [REDACTED] which is provided through Optus.
3. I have been living at the above address in Grantham for over 5½ years and I think we moved in there in June 2005.
4. The house is a highset QLD'er style dwelling with a front deck and is set on about 2.3m stumps. The house is held up by 42 stumps in total with 18 of them being adjustable steel stumps we had installed about 2 years ago. The rest are the original timber stumps that were put there when the house was built.

[REDACTED]

(Witness's signature)


(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)


[REDACTED]


(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

5. The underside of the house was pretty much enclosed in with either timber or roofing iron but it wasn't liveable just used for covered storage.
6. There was also a toilet and an old laundry downstairs and the underneath area was fully lockable.
7. The dwelling is situated on 1277sqm block of land which backs onto Sandy Creek and it is the fifth house on the right as you turn into Harris Street from Gatton Helidon Road.
8. Prior to moving to Grantham we were renting a house in Helidon for 2½ years and before that we were in Toowoomba.
9. Since living in Grantham we hadn't seen any flooding in Grantham until the end of 2010. We actually hadn't ever seen any water flowing in Sandy Creek behind our house until this time as it was always just a dry gully.
10. We had been told that Grantham did flood before we bought into the area but obviously because of the drought we had never seen this until all this rain came towards the end of 2010.



(Witness's signature)


(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)



(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

11. I'm not quite sure of the exact dates or months but towards the end of 2010 and before Christmas there were a couple of times the water in Sandy Creek would come up to our back fence which I know is 4m in depth but that is as high as it would come.
12. I only know this depth because I use the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) website to check river levels and when it is showing Sandy Creek at 4m the water is at my back fence.
13. On these occasions the water would break its banks on Gatton Helidon Road and flow down the road towards the pub. I would say that this water on the road would get to about .5m deep but we would still be high and dry at our place.
14. I can recall that on Boxing Day the 26th day of December 2010, we had a lot of rain and the water from Sandy Creek came up into our yard and under our house and got to about 30cm deep.
15. I would say the water only stayed up for a couple of hours and then it receded and we just cleaned up afterwards. This was our first flood in Grantham and we didn't think much of it and thought it was probably just a typical Grantham flood.



(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)



(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

16. I can't think of any more floods in Grantham prior to the 10th day of January 2011. If the water did come up in Grantham during this time it actually didn't affect our property as we never had any water in our yard.
17. On the 6th day of January 2011, my family and I left Grantham and went to Maleny and stayed in cabin accommodation for a bit of a holiday.
18. We didn't return to Grantham until about 12:00pm on Sunday the 9th day of January 2011, but we knew it had been raining in Grantham all this time as we had seen when we were watching the news.
19. When we were returning to Grantham, we actually had to come via the Bruce Highway as all the country roads were cut off due to flood waters.
20. On the afternoon of the 9th day of January 2011, it started raining quite heavy to moderate. As a precaution we put our two vehicles up onto the Railway yards in Grantham but the flood water didn't come into our yard.
21. It did however flood the Gatton Helidon Road and I remember walking down to this road during the evening to check on the water level but it wasn't too high.


(Witness's signature)

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

22. I didn't think too much of this flood and thought the worst it would be was some water again under our house and I think I ended up going to bed at about 10:30pm.
23. On the 10th day of January 2011, it was a typical sort of day and the weather wasn't great but at our house there wasn't a lot of rain.
24. I was watching the BOM website and I could see that a lot of the catchments up stream were getting a lot of rain. Because of this I knew we were going to get some water coming through Grantham but nothing like what actually came.
25. I remember that at about 1:00pm, and I'm not quite sure of this time. I walked down to Gatton Helidon Road to check the water levels and at this stage it was started to flood down the road into Harris Street.
26. Whilst I was there some guy told me that the flood waters had gone through Helidon pub and it was coming this way.
27. After this everyone that was there hurried home and I went straight home and checked the BOM website river levels at Helidon.
28. I remember when I did this it showed the river level at Helidon was showing 12.68m and I didn't believe what I was seeing.


(Witness's signature)

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

29. I thought it was a mistake so I then shut down this website and logged back into it straight away. When I did this it again showed the creek level at Helidon to still be 12.68m.
30. At this stage I don't think I really believed it and thought the weather station must have been playing up or broken.
31. In saying this, I still got Sharon and Claire to pack some bags with some clothes, insurance papers and wallets etc and Sharon was on the mobile phone to her mother Robyn LYNN who lives in NSW.
32. I yelled at Sharon to get off the phone and I would say by this stage it was about 2:30pm-3:00pm in the afternoon.
33. I remember seeing the water from the creek coming into our backyard very quickly. I actually didn't see any wall of water because of the trees behind our house but the water was flowing into our yard quickly which was unusual.
34. After seeing this I realised that it was not an ordinary flood so I got Sharon, Claire and our dog up into the ceiling void through the manhole.
35. I stayed down in the house and I think I left them up there for about 1 hour.


(Witness's signature)

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

- 36. I was really shitting myself as the water was coming in through the backdoor of the house on the top level.
- 37. I remember taking some photographs of the flood waters from out the back door and on the front deck and I knew we had to get out of there.
- 38. I have since provided these to Police.
- 39. By this stage I could hear everything hitting the house underneath and they were very loud thumps.
- 40. I then first tried to contact the SES on the home phone but I couldn't get through so I rung '000'.
- 41. I was put through to the Police and told them that we were a resident of Grantham and exactly where we lived and that the water was high and we needed to get out.
- 42. The Police operator told us that we were on a list and were aware of the situation but there were others to be picked up first.
- 43. They also told us to get up onto the roof with a torch and something to use to wave at the helicopters.



(Witness's signature)

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

44. I then got up into the ceiling and managed to punch a hole in the fibro of the roof gable and we all got out onto the actual roof.
45. By this stage it started getting dark but whilst we were on the roof I could see that a house had been washed away and lodged up against a tree and there were 3 people on the roof screaming out for help.
46. I don't know who these people were but I have since found out they actually were rescued and survived.
47. I also observed numerous other people in Harris Street on the roofs of their homes and we eventually got off the roof at exactly 7:04pm because I remember looking at the time.
48. It wasn't long after this I can remember a couple of guys called Ray and Dan walking down our street through water with a canoe and a torch calling out to people, "Is anybody there, is anybody there".
49. I don't know their full names but I know ray is from [REDACTED] and I think Dan was living there as a boarder.
50. I went out onto the front deck and spoke with them and they told me that more water was coming.

[REDACTED]
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

[REDACTED]
(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

51. They told us to go to their place at [REDACTED] [REDACTED] as their land was about 1m higher than ours.
52. We then walked across the road to their place and the water was just below my waist in depth.
53. I then told Ray and Dan about other people in the street that may need some help and they went and checked on them.
54. We went to [REDACTED] Grantham and I left the girls there and went back to our house and I grabbed some food and took it back to [REDACTED] [REDACTED]
55. We sat at this address for quite a few hours and I would say there would have been about 20 people in this house ranging from babies to elderly people.
56. Eventually 4 swift water rescue personnel came to the address and they told us to stay put as they couldn't get us out as the water was still pretty well flowing very quickly.
57. After they had left we could hear machinery in the distance and a front end loader came driving down Harris Street and they took us out 5 people at a time in the bucket of the machine.

[REDACTED]
(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
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[REDACTED]
(Signature of police officer
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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: WATKINS, Daniel Brian

58. The took us to west of the bridge in Grantham on Gatton Helidon Road and the Police took our names, dates of birth and addresses and we were then transported by Police vehicle to the Helidon Evacuation Centre.

59. When we got to the Evacuation Centre we again provided our details and we were looked after by the locals as best they could.

60. On Tuesday the 18th day of January 2011, we were eventually allowed back to our house and we have been cleaning up ever since.

61. On Sunday the 30th day of January 2011, I attended the Gatton Police Station and provided this statement to Detective Shayne ROLPH.

[Redacted signature]

D. B. WATKINS

Justices Act Acknowledgement

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 30/01/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 10 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false.

.....[Redacted].....Signature

Signed at Gatton this 30th day of January 2011

[Redacted signature]

(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

[Redacted signature]

(Signature of police officer
preparing statement)