

<i>Name of Witness</i>	William Hilton BROWN
<i>Date of Birth</i>	██████████
<i>Address and contact details</i>	████ Cypress Street, Torquay ████████████████████
<i>Occupation</i>	Chandler
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Det Insp Mark Ainsworth
<i>Date taken</i>	2/9/2011

William Hilton BROWN states;

1. I am a married man, █████ years of age and I reside with my family at █████ Cypress Street, Torquay. I am a Chandler by occupation and am the proprietor of the Mary River Marine Supplies and Chandlery situated at 71 Wharf Street, Maryborough. This business is located on the Maryborough Marina and sits on the Mary River front amongst other businesses in the complex. I have operated this business for the past 2 years; however it has been established at the same location for the past 20 years. The business is a two level building with the ground level being show room and general stock with the upper level being for storage and general use for my staff and myself.
2. The Fraser Coast Regional Council is the local council that governs our area and my business is zoned industrial/residential. The front area of my business contains a board walk area then a marina area where people moor boats for various periods of time. The proprietor of the marina is █████ who resides above the marina with his wife. █████ has owned the marina for the past 16 years.

Witness Signature... █████ ..... Signature of officer █████  
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3. I formerly resided in Victoria and was involved in assisting the Community in evacuations on a voluntary basis during the Black Saturday bushfires. I do not currently do any voluntary work in the Maryborough area.
4. I recall December, 2010, during this month we had substantial rainfall in the area of our business and I recall it rained most days of that month. Between the 15<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 and the 3<sup>rd</sup> January, 2011 the Mary River was loaded with a lot of fresh water from the constant rainfall. I recall on 23<sup>rd</sup> December, 2010 we got our first scare when water rose up to the bottom of the boards on the wharf and also started to pool around the footpath area out the front of the Marina. During this period of time, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] (another Maryborough local) continually monitored the BOM site and river levels to keep an eye on what was occurring. I kept regular contact with both men in order to be advised and remain aware of what was occurring with regard to flooding in the area of my business. Both of these men have been in the area most of their lives and have an excellent knowledge of the Mary River.
5. On 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 both [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] believed that the water from the river would inundate the marina up to about one metre and that this would occur about 2pm on the same day. This estimation was based on their local knowledge and the site of the Marina.

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.... Signature of office [REDACTED]

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As a result at about 9am on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 I commenced removing stock and other items from my business in a removal van I hired. This van came with a driver and two staff who assisted in the removal.

6. The stock and other items were removed to a storage shed operated by Elmers Removalists. By about 1pm on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2010, we had finished evacuating my business. I remained at the Marina and saw the water rise to just under a metre in height around the Marina by about 2.10pm.
7. The rain continued throughout the day on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2010. On the night of 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 my son and I stayed at [REDACTED] residence above the Marina and continued to monitor the river and flooding. Around 1am on 28<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 low tide had set in, at this time [REDACTED] indicated that he thought he may have made a wrong calculation and suggested we move any remaining stock and other items not evacuated to the upper level of my business. At this time the water was still less than a metre high around the Marina.
8. On 28<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 I returned home and then returned to the Marina on 29<sup>th</sup> December, 2010. At this time the water had receded and I commence cleaning out my business that had been affected by flood waters. Over the next week, I commenced re –stocking the business with the stock I had previously removed.

9. Rain continued to fall over the next week or so and on 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 at about 4pm the power to the Marina went out and remained out for a period of about 1 and a half hours. Around this time I returned to my residence and collected my wife and son and also hitched the trailer to the back of my car. At about 5.30pm I returned to my business. At this time [REDACTED] was checking the BOM site and informed me that he thought we would be alright tonight. At this time we commenced moving some of our stock up to the higher level of the business again. We moved refrigerators from the premises onto my trailer.
10. At about 8.30pm on the same date, [REDACTED] son advised us that we needed to evacuate immediately. [REDACTED] and his son had been measuring river heights and formed the opinion that we needed to move immediately.
11. Shortly after 8.30pm the water commenced flowing into the car park at the front of the marina. This water had come from a Southerly direction from Kent Street towards the Marina. As a result I then drove the car and trailer to Alice Street where I stored the same. About 15 minutes, I returned to my business and saw that there was approximately 400mm of water across the car park. My business at this time had approximately 200 – 300mm throughout. I then continued to move items to the upper level of my business. By about 1 am on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 the water had reached the power points which are about 1.2metres to 1.4metres in height off the floor. I then went back to [REDACTED] residence and remained there.

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12.I recall at first light on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 being awoken by a boat that had broken its moorings from the North East end of the river and smashed into two boats moored at our Marina. I went downstairs to my business and the water was up to my neck. The water was flowing very quickly and was flowing from the direction of Kent Street across the old train line to the Marina.

13.As the day progressed the water continued to rise and by between 8am and 9am the water had reached about 2 metres in height. At this time I handed out life jackets to people in boats on the river who were assisting in removing items from the Marina via boat to higher land. These boats would convey items to the intersection of Wharf Street and March Street where the items were then loaded on trucks. At this time there were about 3 to 4 boats assisting with this process. These boats were those of private individuals. Some of the items removed including stock from my business which was taken and stored at the Engineers Arms Hotel. We did not receive any assistance from emergency services including police, Council or SES.

14.At this time our evacuation process, particularly at the above mentioned intersection was being hampered by sightseers and media. I rang the police to see if we could get assistance to have the road closed at this location however the police referred me to the council. I then attempted to ring council however could not get through. I then requested sightseers to contact council for assistance. However this did not occur.

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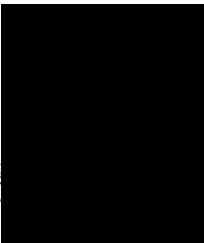
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15. At about 11am on the 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 I cut a large hole on the south western side of the Marina building in order for the proprietor of Muddy's Café to remove stock from his premises. At this time the container that was located in the car park on the Kent Street side of the building began to float downstream. We had already tied the doors open to sink it, but the force of the water was greater than we thought. As a result we tied it off to a tree in the western end of the grassed car park using a 28mm rope. The container stayed there till Tuesday night when something hit it and took it down stream, we have not seen this container again. At around this time I requested someone to get onto the Mayor for help. I was later advised that he could not be found. At this time we still had no assistance from any person in authority and if it weren't for the local volunteers our situation would have been significantly worse than what it was.

16. By about 2pm on 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 we had managed to move most items out of the Marina. By this time the water had smashed windows and some stock had been washed away. I had 6, 45 pound anchors just washed away from my business and were lodged on the wharf about 15 to 20 metres away. This demonstrates the flow of water that hit us from the direction of Kent Street.

Witness Signature. 

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Signature of office 

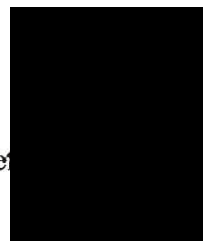
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17. Later during the day of 8<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 I found the Mayor in Lenox Street, Maryborough watching council staff erect a temporary levy. I introduced myself to the mayor and had a discussion with him regarding the inaction of council and himself with regards to flooding to our Marina. The mayor responded to me that he only found out at 11.30pm on the 7<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 that there was going to be a flood. He told me that there was nothing he could do for the Marina as it was already under water. By this time our discussion became rather heated. I invited the Mayor to come and have a look at the Marina however he refused. I asked the Mayor about flooding to the Marina on 27<sup>th</sup> December, 2010 and he claimed he knew nothing about the flooding on that date.

18. About two weeks after the flooding the mayor finally visited the Marina and in my opinion this was only because Federal Labour Member Simon Crean visited us and there was also a media presence. The mayor and council completely abandoned us during this flood and did not offer or provide any assistance at this time.

19. We had little or no warning about the flooding. My business was under water for about 8 days. On 8/9/10 January, 2011 the water in my business rose to a height of 8.2 metres. On 11 January, 2011 it was at a height of 8 metres and then receded to be about .5 metre on 15<sup>th</sup> January, 2011. At 5am on 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 the water had gone.




20. I have a number of concerns including:

- Lack of assistance from emergency services, council and SES.
- Inaccurate BOM warnings with regards to river heights in that they were about 12 hours behind what was actually occurring, however in saying that their rainfall predictions were accurate.
- Lack of preparation and warnings to the community by authorities regarding the flooding.
- The manner in which SES volunteers operated flood water boats in supplying food to Granville residents. They were flying past the Marina causing wash to come into the Marina without any consideration. On one occasion the Water police intercepted one of the SES boat and warned them about their methods of operation.

21. At the conclusion of the flood event, Council did provide buckets and mops. 'Bay Skips' donated skips to load rubbish into. Bunnings provided containers for packing material into and building materials to assist with repairs. On Saturday 16<sup>th</sup> January, 2011 the QFRS attended and assisted with hosing down of the buildings, jetty, wharf and road areas.

22. My actual business was closed down for a period of five weeks after the floods.

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**RECOMMENDATIONS:**

- There needs to be enhanced communications and co-ordination between agencies and also with the community to ensure the community is aware of what is occurring.
- Experienced members of the community, particularly those with local knowledge should have input into Local Disaster Management Groups to ensure that local knowledge is captured.
- Council still have not met with us since the floods and we feel we are being kept in the dark. Council have had flood meetings with other businesses but have excluded us. Council needs to be inclusive and needs to consider the needs of businesses/residence affected by flooding.
- Consideration of road closures needs to be high on the agenda of what can be improved for next time. The non-existence of road closures and control of media and sightseers severely hampered our evacuation efforts.

*I am able to produce a series of photographs of flooding to my business and the Maryborough Marina.*

23. I am also aware Detective Ainsworth took a series of photographs of the Marina and photographs towards Kent Street where the water flowed from.

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*I am able to describe the events that occurred depicted in these photos.*

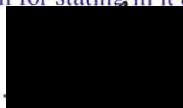


W.H.BROWN

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 .....2-9-11..... 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.



.....Signature

Signed at Maryborough this 20<sup>th</sup> day of September 2011

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