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6 March 2011

The Royal Commissioner
Justice Cate Holmes
Supreme Court
BRISBANE

Dear Commissioner

SUBMISSION FOR CONSIDERATION
Property Lots 6 & 7 RP 187663 Parish Oxley

My submission is primarily directed at the management, policy and decision making for the responsible entity for the untimely release of water from Wivenhoe Dam

BACKGROUND

My property is situated on the Brisbane River. I had the experience of the 1974 floods and therefore sought the best possible engineering and hydrology information when deciding to construct my home in 1986. In summary, all relevant government agencies gave the adjusted flood height for an equivalent to 1974 flood after allowance for Wivenhoe at 8.9m AHD. On that basis, I allowed a margin for error and constructed a residence with a floor level of 9.2m AHD. The 2011 flood rose to a height of 9.88m AHD which caused inundation to the extent of 68cm.

CIRCUMSTANCES OF THE RELEASE

These are matters which will no doubt be the subject of detailed investigation by the Commission.

At this stage, I have only been able to access the comments of relevant Minister, The Hon. Stephen Robinson. During the course of an interview on ABC radio, the Minister made observations about the releases of water from Wivenhoe and, in response to criticism, made comments that a more judicious management of the release of water from Wivenhoe dam in the days preceding 12/13 January 2011 could have seen a reduction in the flood peak but would not have prevented widespread flooding and inundation. By way of

demonstration, he ventured that the likely impact could have been around 1 metre.

While I appreciate the honesty of the Minister(although his comments were insensitive), I also expect he was guarded in his speech and estimate with a view to exculpating his Government from any potential liability for possible mismanagement, your Commission needs to be cognizant of the impact that reductions in flood peaks of the quantum acknowledged by the Minister has on affected properties.

CONSEQUENCES OF WATER ENTERING LIVING AREAS

In my case, had an alternative water release management plan as acknowledged by the Minister been implemented and a peak reduction of even say 2/3 of his suggested 1 metre then the following damage would NOT have ensued:

- White goods
- Plaster board
- Painting
- Electrical wiring
- Kitchen cupboards
- Carpet/underlay
- Skirting boards
- Doors

I was also unable to occupy my home from 12 January 2011 to 5 March 2011 when I was required to find alternative accommodation

SUMMARY

I made every effort and attempt to comply with the best available advice from all relevant authorities before constructing my home with a small safety margin as an additional buffer. It appears that mismanagement/government interference/incompetence has caused a result which in the ordinary course, should not have occurred. The consequences in my case were catastrophic.

ORAL SUBMISSION

I welcome the opportunity to make an oral submission.



SUSAN SHAND