



**Goondiwindi Regional Council  
Local Disaster Management Group  
Debrief Meeting  
Monday, 31/01/2011**

**Meeting Minutes**

*Attendees:-*

**QPS** – Andrew Grafton, Greg Morrow, Richard McIntosh  
**QH** – Katie Jefford  
**QAS** – Blair Fogarty  
**EMQ** – Bob Bundy  
**QFRS** – Jeff Fechner  
**Kaloma Home for the Aged** – Penni Roberts, Hugh Hamilton, Pauline Cleary  
**Country Energy** – Jim Burdett  
**GRC** - Graeme Scheu, Rick Kearney, Peter Stewart, Carl Manton, Dave Burges, Jason Quinnell, Neil Kratzke, Teresa Pfingst

*Apologies:-*

**QAS** – Andrew McLean  
**SES** – Graeme Debritt  
**GRC** – Ian Badham

The Meeting commenced at 4:05pm

1. **WELCOME – COUNCILLOR RICK KEARNEY, CHAIR**  
LDMG Chair, Councillor Rick Kearney welcomed attendees to the meeting. The aim of the meeting was to identify the things that worked well during the January 2011 Flood Event, so that they could be recorded for future benefit and also to identify those things that did not work as well so that they could be rectified, as appropriate. The feedback provided will be incorporated into an action plan which will then be used to guide the LDMG over the coming months.
2. **TIMELINE OF KEY ACTIVITIES DURING THE EVENT – COUNCILLOR RICK KEARNEY**  
*Weir River, Dumaresq River, McIntyre River, LDMG Activation*  
An information sheet identifying the key dates and activities which occurred during the flood event was handed out to attendees for discussion. A brief verbal summary of the key events was also provided by Councillor Kearney.
3. **LDMG ACTIONS RELATIVE TO KEY ACTIVITIES – COUNCILLOR RICK KEARNEY**
  - a) **LDMG Response - Texas Peak, Lead into Goondiwindi Peak, including discussions with SDCC.**

*Feedback:-*

- A doorknock was carried at Texas by QPS. It was identified that property owners within this area had approx 36 hours notice for inundation; property owners maintained contact with their neighbours in many cases; it was noted that there were some instances where property owners ignored the advice given by QPS.

*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Maintain database and contact details of properties that may be impacted by flooding up and down the river system.

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**b) Welfare and Recovery - Evacuation Centres, Recovery Activities**

*Director Carl Manton and Portfolio Councillors McMahon and Percival were the team leaders for conducting the Welfare and Recovery Operations for the flood event.*

**Evacuation Centre**

**Feedback:-**

- The establishment and running of the Evacuation Centre at the Goondiwindi Showgrounds was a successful operation; records of those who attended the evacuation centre were maintained, as appropriate.

**Follow Up Action:-**

- ii.) Suggest existing infrastructure at the Goondiwindi Showgrounds would not support a large scale evacuation. Review requirements, identify options and source appropriate funding which may be necessary for potential upgrade of facilities.

**Recovery Operations**

**Feedback:-**

- Department of Communities (DOCs) established and maintained contact with the LDMG Chair throughout the response and recovery phases of the flood event; they established support centres in both Goondiwindi and Texas to provide assistance to the community as/where required; the support operations provided by DOCs was well resourced.

**Follow Up Action:-**

- i.) Further consultation regarding consistency of operations and availability of inter state assistance in these types of disaster events (cross border issues arose during the event).

**4. COMMENTS ON BOM DATA AND INFORMATION - COUNCILLOR RICK KEARNEY**

**Feedback:-**

- GRC Modelling (historical data) – data used in the working model was based on the 1976 flood levels
- During the Event BOM were able to advise details of the volume of water flowing through the river system, with initial prediction for 10.95m level, which equated to twice the volume of water currently in the system; BOM were unable to confirm where the water would come from; BOM believed the water volume would exceed previous flood levels.
- Information from BOM was readily available; BOM meteorologists were both accessible and giving of information as / when required.

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*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Suggest requirement for additional monitoring stations to be placed at more regular intervals along the river system.
- ii.) Follow up on shared data available / provided between agencies (Council, BOM, etc).
- iii.) Request BOM provide more frequent updates relative to the Dumaresq River (suggest 1 hourly updates, not 6 hourly).
- iv.) Sunwater Qld and StateWater NSW – it was noted that during the event it appeared that these agencies did not provide information to BOM regarding release of water from dams.

**5. RESPONSE ACTIVITIES WEST OF GOONDIWINDI**

a) **Re-supply**

*Feedback:-*

- Re-supply to rural properties west of Goondiwindi, requiring essential goods / medication, was carried out via helicopter and road drops.

*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Query - How much support is available for council to assist rural property owners with maintaining their own levee banks protecting rural houses?

**6. INDIVIDUAL AGENCY COMMENTS**

a) **QPS (Richard McIntosh)**

*Feedback:-*

- A doorknock was carried for Texas by QPS – (north to south; east to west) It was identified that property owners within this area had approx 36 hours notice for inundation; property owners maintained contact with their neighbours in many cases; it was noted that there were some instances where property owners ignored the advice given by QPS.

*Follow up Action:-*

- i.) Requests for Assistance – some property owners contacted SES Qld for assistance during the event and the request was redirected to SES NSW for action; issues arose regarding delays in response times because of the rerouting of the initial request for assistance; (cross border issues).
- ii.) Who should notify property owners (door knocking) – EMQ suggested operation should be led by LDMG (Council) with QPS assist. Incorporate process into disaster plan/s.
- iii.) Staff Relief / Meal Breaks - suggest appoint a particular group responsible for the provision of assistance (meals / drinks / fatigue management) to staff manning various 'stations' throughout an emergency event (welfare issue)
- iv.) Follow up alignment of boundaries for LDMG, QPS, QFRS, QAS, Health, etc.

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**b) EMQ / SES (Bob Bundy)**

*Feedback:-*

- It was acknowledged that the availability of EMQ Staff during the event was limited due to various other emergency response operations underway within Queensland.
- Resupply guidelines – it was noted that interpretation of the resupply guidelines by various agencies appears to be loose; the document will be reviewed by EMQ and feedback / updates will be provided to stakeholders as/when available.
- Flood Boat Operators – EMQ acknowledged that there is a limited availability of suitably qualified flood boat operators within our local region; training courses are in the planning stage; it is anticipated that this issue will be addressed in the near future.
- An update on the establishment of a local SES Group for Texas was provided.
- It was acknowledged that the 132 500 SES emergency number experienced technical difficulties during January 2011; a review is currently underway to address the problem.

*Follow Up Actions:-*

- i.) Communication Flow – clarify / define protocols and educate stakeholders regarding appropriate communication pathways between local controllers, respective agency heads, and the LDMG, in emergency events scenarios – *EMQ as actioning agency*
- ii.) Training - SES Volunteers; establish defined roles and responsibilities and prepare target specific training for SES Volunteers – *LDMG (defined roles); EMQ (training)*
- iii.) Digital Elevation Modelling – *EMQ to provide status update to Council*

**c) Kaloma Home for the Aged – Penni Roberts**

*Feedback:-*

- Kaloma's evacuation plan is currently under review per outcomes from the January 2011 flood event.
- It was noted that some confusion arose when various agencies provided conflicting information.

*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Communication - Kaloma has requested early notification regarding potential for evacuation in an emergency event.
- ii.) Evacuation Centre Facilities - Kaloma has requested modification / upgrade of the existing facilities at the Inglewood Evacuation Centre to support patient requirements in emergency events.

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- iii.) Welfare & Evacuation Sub-Plan - consultation with Kaloma representatives is required to incorporate needs / address expectations, relative to the preparation of the Welfare and Evacuation Sub-Plan.
- iv.) Evacuation Operations – clarification is sought regarding who is responsible for Kaloma patients once they arrive at the airport in an evacuation scenario (Queensland Health / QAS / Kaloma)?
- v.) Retrieval Operations – clarification is sought regarding who is responsible for initiating the retrieval process for the return of patients to Kaloma, (recovery phase)?
- vi.) Communication – review the flow of information from LDMG to Kaloma at the appropriate stages in an emergency event.

*Additional feedback on operations relevant to Kaloma during the flood event, was provided to Council by Penni Roberts (Kaloma CEO) prior to the LDMG Debrief Meeting. The information will be given further consideration by the Welfare Committee during the planning process of the Welfare and Evacuation Sub-Plan.*

**d) Queensland Health (Katie Jefford)**

**Feedback:-**

- It was noted that the Texas, Inglewood, Goondiwindi QH Directors maintained a good communication / working relationship throughout the emergency event.
- The actual evacuation from the hospital went smoothly, however it was noted that some communication / authority issues arose during the planning and transportation stage of the evacuation;
- it was identified that there were some issues regarding channels of authority between agencies (local / operational vs district vs state);
- It was noted that some confusion arose when various agencies provided conflicting information.

**Follow Up Action:-**

- i.) Review communication needs; identify communication channels.
- ii.) Identify relevant agencies, authorisations required and communication channels specific to an emergency event (ie scenarios including patient evacuation, patient retrieval, requests for assistance).

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e) **QAS (Blair Fogarty)**

*Feedback:-*

- The Aero Club facility was appropriate for QAS needs when utilised as the mobile hospital unit. However, some additional modifications / upgrade to the facility was identified for potential future use (building access).
- Ambulance operations were appropriate throughout the event.
- Communication – it was noted that some communication issues arose over the course of the event. (Tasking - the operations centres are in Toowoomba; Toowoomba required approval from Brisbane to move patients – time delays occurred due to slow communication between agencies.)

*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Facilities Modification / Upgrade – improved access to the building for wheelchairs / stretchers, is required (ie ramp). Also an additional toilet block at / near the facility would be appropriate.
- ii.) Identify relevant agencies, authorisations required and communication channels specific to an emergency event (ie scenarios including patient evacuation, patient retrieval, requests for assistance).

f) **QFRS (Jeff Fechner)**

*Feedback:-*

- Regular daily contact with personnel from Texas and Yelarbon QFRS/SES was maintained as appropriate throughout the flood event.
- It was noted that there were some communication issues regarding relative to the Boggabilla SES Group and helicopters.

*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Communication – identify cross border communication issues and liaise with relevant agencies; carry out lobbying as appropriate.

g) **Country Energy (Jim Burdett)**

*Feedback:-*

- An update was provided relative to the Texas region. It was noted that there were significant losses of infrastructure for Country Energy in this region which was caused by the flood event.
- A brief update on other regional areas was also provided.
- It was noted that communication between LDMG and Country Energy was appropriate during the event.
- Country Energy have planned an upgrade of the transformers in Marshall Street, Goondiwindi.

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- It was mentioned that Country Energy have a designated Welfare Officer who is responsible for accommodation, food and fuel requirements of personnel during an emergency event. It was suggested that LDMG consider the benefits of establishing a similar role within the disaster management plan/s.

*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Welfare - review the necessity / benefits of establishing a designated Welfare Group / Officer to be responsible for accommodation, food and fuel requirements of personnel during an emergency event.
- ii.) Generator – suggest Council consider the installation of a priority circuit (to maintain small number lights and powerpoints) in the event of power interruptions during an emergency event.

h) **LDMG**

**Communication Methods:-**

*Feedback:-*

- The role of the Mayor as the media liaison officer during the flood event worked well.
- The information released to media outlets was appropriate and accurate.
- The Council Website and Facebook were well utilised during the flood event. Facebook proved to be an effective communication tool (statistics showed in excess of 2 million hits during the flood event). It was noted that there was some inaccurate information distributed via news media outlets during the event - facebook and the webpage provided a means for the LDMG to combat inaccurate information.
- The two letter drops to residents of the west of West Street and in the Glenoak Road area proved an effective means of communication at critical times.
- The emergency alerts issued to the community worked well.

*Follow Up Action:-*

- i.) Communication – identify cross border communication issues and liaise with relevant agencies; carry out lobbying as appropriate.
- ii.) Telstra Representative – suggested inclusion of a Telstra representative on either the LDMG Executive Member or Stakeholder Agency contact lists.
- iii.) Public Education Campaign - the role of the LDMG; the Disaster Management Plan; the role of stakeholders and the community in disaster events.
- iv.) Public Education Campaign - emergency alerts and what to expect in an emergency event.
- v.) Public Education Campaign - clearly identify and communicate to various organisations and the community, the appropriate pathways for obtaining information / providing feedback during an emergency event.

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i) **Goondiwindi Regional Council (GRC)**

*Feedback:-*

- The January 2011 flood event showed the importance of having a clear and concise disaster management plan; identification and streamlined co-ordination of the relevant key roles in an emergency event; the development of Sub-Plans to sit under the broader disaster management plan.
- It was noted that the feedback from this Debrief Meeting will provide direct input into reviewing the disaster management plan to incorporate key outcomes from the January 2011 flood event, as/where appropriate.
- The GRC Call Centre worked well during the flood event; staff were commended for the assistance that they provided.

*Follow Up Action:-*

- ICT (100 Marshall Street) - Auxiliary power to LDMG room and Networking Hub. Review the need for an automatic backup power source for these areas and the requirement for an automatic start generator.
- ICT (82 Marshall Street) – generator tests are currently carried out on an informal basis – suggest formalise procedure for conducting regular function tests and maintain records accordingly.
- Rostering of Staff during an emergency event – review and formalise rostering procedures for emergency events.
- Communication – identify cross border communication issues and liaise with relevant agencies; carry out lobbying as appropriate.
- Goondiwindi Levee Banks – Geotech experts have been engaged to provide advice on the identified areas of concern; progress as appropriate.
- Digital Elevation Mapping – liaise with EMQ for an update on this issue.
- Disaster Management Framework – cross border issues (relations / resourcing) – lobby for change relative to the cross border issues experienced during the flood event.
- Community Education Programs – (per notes made under LDMG follow up action).

**The meeting concluded at 5:30pm**

**ATTACHMENTS**

1. Timeline – Key Activities
2. LECC Minutes – Texas Meeting 27/01/11
3. LECC Minutes – Inglewood Meeting 28/01/11