

STATEMENT OF CAPTAIN RICHARD JOHNSON

I, Captain Richard Johnson of MacArthur Avenue East, Pinkenba in the State of Queensland, Regional Harbour Master Brisbane, state as follows:-

Qualifications, experience and duties as Regional Harbour Master

1. I am currently employed as the Regional Harbour Master Brisbane by the Department of Transport and Main Roads and I have held this position for 13 years and 2 months.
2. I:
 - (a) am the Regional Harbour Master for the Brisbane region appointed under section 12 of the *Maritime Safety Queensland Act 2002* and employed by Maritime Safety Queensland. I have been employed to this position since 11 February 1998;
 - (b) hold a Master Class 1 Unrestricted Certificate of Competency;
 - (c) am a Shipping Inspector under the *Transport Operations (Marine Safety) Act 1994*;
 - (d) am an authorised officer under the *Transport Operations (Marine Pollution) Act 1995*;
 - (e) hold a Recreational Ship Masters License issued in 1990;
 - (f) began my seagoing career in 1965 commencing as Cadet Officer and working right through as Master, serving on various types of ships around the world before taking up a shore based position as Marine Pilot in the Port of Cairns in 1987. In 1989 I was promoted to Relieving Harbour Master Northern Ports of Queensland. In 1990 I took up the position of Harbour Master Townsville and then was successful in gaining the position of Regional Harbour Master for the region. During that time, I also held pilot licenses for the ports of Bowen, Abbot Point, Townsville, Lucinda, Hinchinbrook, Mourilyan, Cairns, Cape Flattery, Thursday Island and Weipa.
3. As the Regional Harbour Master (Brisbane):
 - (a) I report to the General Manager of Maritime Safety Queensland;
 - (b) My role in the region includes the safe movement of vessels, marine safety and marine pollution response;
 - (c) I am responsible for the whole of the region, covering the area from Double Island Point to the southern tip of North Stradbroke Island and Logan River including all rivers, creeks and waterways in this area.

Requirement from the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry

4. I have received a letter from the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry dated 7 April 2011 and understand that I am required to provide information on a

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Exhibit Number:

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number of topics pursuant to the *Commission of Inquiry Act 1950*, being the following topics:

- (a) Identification of those vessels or structures which became hazardous to life and private and public property (river hazards), during the 2010/2011 flood events, including in particular:
 - (i) the Riverwalk;
 - (ii) the Moggill Ferry;
 - (iii) the Drift Restaurant;
 - (iv) CityCat terminals;
 - (v) Dockside Marina;
 - (vi) The Island;
 - (vii) Pontoons;
 - (viii) boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River;referred to as "**Requirement 1 – hazardous vessels or structures**".
- (b) Details of the information received by the Regional Harbour Master Brisbane and/or Maritime Safety Queensland (MSQ) during the 2010/2011 flood events regarding river hazards in the Brisbane River, including the source/s of that information, when it was received, the nature of the hazard identified and the risks presented thereby:
 - (i) the Riverwalk;
 - (ii) the Moggill Ferry;
 - (iii) the Drift Restaurant;
 - (iv) CityCat terminals;
 - (v) Dockside Marina;
 - (vi) The Island;
 - (vii) Pontoons;
 - (viii) boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River;referred to as "**Requirement 2 – information received**".
- (c) Details of any advice received by the Regional Harbour Master Brisbane, in respect of any river hazards during the 2010/2011 flood events, including the source/s of that information and when it was received:
 - (i) the Riverwalk;
 - (ii) the Moggill Ferry;
 - (iii) the Drift Restaurant;
 - (iv) CityCat terminals;
 - (v) Dockside Marina;
 - (vi) The Island;

- (vii) Pontoons;
 - (viii) boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River;
- referred to as "**Requirement 3 – advice received**".
- (d) Details of any advice provided by the Regional Harbour Master Brisbane and/or MSQ in respect of any river hazards during the 2010/2011 flood events, including when the advice was provided and to whom:
- (i) the Riverwalk;
 - (ii) the Moggill Ferry;
 - (iii) the Drift Restaurant;
 - (iv) CityCat terminals;
 - (v) Dockside Marina;
 - (vi) The Island;
 - (vii) Pontoons;
 - (viii) boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River;
- referred to as "**Requirement 4 – advice given**".
- (e) Details of the action/s taken or proposed by the Regional Harbour Master Brisbane and/or MSQ in response to threats posed by river hazards in the Brisbane River, including details of the resources deployed in support of any action/s taken and of any inter-agency cooperation:
- (i) the Riverwalk;
 - (ii) the Moggill Ferry;
 - (iii) the Drift Restaurant;
 - (iv) CityCat terminals;
 - (v) Dockside Marina;
 - (vi) The Island;
 - (vii) Pontoons;
 - (viii) boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River;
- referred to as "**Requirement 5 – actions taken or proposed**".
- (f) Any recommendations to mitigate or manage the risks posed by potential river hazards in the Brisbane River during future flood events.
- referred to as "**Requirement 6 – recommendations**".

Requirement 1 – hazardous vessels or structures

The Riverwalk

5. The Riverwalk:

- (a) is situated on a stretch of the Brisbane River from Riverview Court (at the end of Merthyr Road), New Farm at the land formally described as Lot 900 on SP134601, running perpendicular to the bank of the Brisbane River

along the Brisbane River, rejoining the land above high watermark at the land formally described as Lot 4 on SP128032;

- (b) was considered to be a hazard because:
 - (i) the Riverwalk is a buoyant structure, designed to float on water;
 - (ii) a structural failure of the Riverwalk caused by hydrological conditions could result in the dislodgement of the Riverwalk;
 - (iii) if the Riverwalk became dislodged, it would be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
 - (iv) the movement referred in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in:
 - (A) a collision between the Riverwalk and other property in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;
 - (B) the loss of the Riverwalk itself;
 - (v) a collision referred to in subparagraph (v) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);
 - (vi) if any part of the Riverwalk that is not buoyant became dislodged, it would potentially sink to the bottom of the Brisbane River, and potentially cause ongoing navigational hazards;
 - (vii) where the Riverwalk or any part of the Riverwalk sinks, there is a risk associated with injury and damage to property as part of recovery works, where recovery of that material occurs;
 - (viii) there was potential for the Riverwalk to collide with things downstream and create a dam with other floating debris, for example, catching on the footings of the Gateway Bridge.

The Moggill Ferry

6. The Moggill Ferry:

- (a) is situated on the Brisbane River, adjacent to Lot 3 on SL5094 and Lot 35 on M33137, Moggill Road, Moggill;
- (b) was considered to be a hazard because:
 - (i) it is a marine vessel;
 - (ii) it is not a powered vessel, it runs on cables and winches;
 - (iii) the vessel was moored in the Brisbane River;
 - (iv) a failure of the mooring of the vessel means that it would be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
 - (v) the movement referred in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in:
 - (A) a collision between the Moggill Ferry and other property (including infrastructure) in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;

- (B) the loss of the Moggill Ferry itself, if damage sustained was capable of making it unfit for future use;
- (vi) a collision referred to in subparagraph (v) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);
- (vii) where the Moggill Ferry sinks, there is a risk associated with injury and damage to property as part of the works to recover the Moggill Ferry;
- (viii) there was potential for the Moggill Ferry to collide with structures downstream and create a dam or hazard with other debris, either by sinking in shallow water or becoming stuck on other structures.

The Drift Restaurant

7. The Drift Restaurant:

- (a) is situated Coronation Drive, Milton on Lots 1 and 2 on SP145291;
- (b) was considered to be a hazard because:
 - (i) the restaurant is situated on the Brisbane River, and moored in a manner not dissimilar to how marine vessels are moored on the Brisbane River;
 - (ii) the restaurant is a buoyant structure, designed to float on water, but is not a vessel and is outside of the jurisdiction of MSQ;
 - (iii) a structural failure of the connection between the restaurant and the bed and banks of the Brisbane River caused by hydrological conditions could result in the dislodgement of the restaurant;
 - (iv) if the restaurant became dislodged, it would be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
 - (v) the movement referred in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in:
 - (A) a collision between the restaurant and other property (including infrastructure) in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;
 - (B) the loss of the restaurant itself, if damage sustained was capable of making it unfit for future use;
 - (vi) a collision referred to in subparagraph (v) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);
 - (vii) if any part of the restaurant that is not buoyant became dislodged, it would potentially sink to the bottom of the Brisbane River, and potentially cause ongoing navigational hazards;
 - (viii) where the restaurant sinks, there is a risk associated with injury and damage to property as part of the works to recover the restaurant;

- (ix) there was potential for the Restaurant to collide with structures downstream and create a dam or hazard with other debris, either by sinking in shallow water or becoming stuck on other structures.

CityCat terminals

8. CityCat terminals:

(a) are situated as follows:

- (i) Apollo Road, adjacent to Lot 24 on RP813319;
- (ii) Bretts Wharf, Kingsford-Smith Drive, immediately south (after crossing Kingsford-Smith Drive) of Lot 7 on RP55639;
- (iii) Bulimba, at the end of Oxford Street, Bulimba, adjacent to Lot 3 on RP826285;
- (iv) Hawthorn, Gordon Street Hawthorn, adjacent to Lot 212 on RP12486;
- (v) New Farm Park, on Lot 1 on SP172158;
- (vi) Mowbray Park, Park Avenue, Mowbray Park, on Lot 10 on SP172157;
- (vii) Norman Park, Wynnum Road, Norman Park, adjacent to the Norman Park Ferry Reserve described as Lot 878 on B123421;
- (viii) Sydney Street, New Farm, adjacent to Lot 332 on SL6269;
- (ix) Riverside, on Lot 564 on SL10993;
- (x) Eagle Street Pier, on Lot 11 on SL12763;
- (xi) Thornton Street, Kangaroo Point, adjacent to Lot 1 on RP10854;
- (xii) Southbank 1 and 2, situated at the Southbank Parklands, Clem Jones Promenade, Southbank, situated adjacent to Lot 902 on CP839764;
- (xiii) Southbank 3 Clem Jones Promenade, Southbank, situated in Lot 904 on CP839764;
- (xiv) Guyatt Park, Macquarie Street, St Lucia, situated adjacent to Lot 227 on RP23306;
- (xv) Teneriffe, Commercial Road, Teneriffe, adjacent to Lot 2 on SP171342;
- (xvi) Dockside, Ferry Street, Kangaroo Point, in or around Lot 309 on SL813356;
- (xvii) River Plaza, Dock Street, South Brisbane (next to the Goodwill Bridge);
- (xviii) Holman Street, Kangaroo Point, situated on Lot 1 on SP135365;
- (xix) QUT, Alice Street, Brisbane, situated adjacent to Lot 645 on CP891387;
- (xx) North Quay, Queens Wharf Road, Brisbane, situated on Lot 2 on CP890180;

- (xxi) Regatta, at the Corner of Sylvan Road and Coronation Drive, Toowong, situated adjacent to Lot 712 on B3824;
 - (xxii) Hoogley Street, West End, situated on Lot 900 on SP237716;
 - (xxiii) St Lucia / University of Queensland, Sir William Macgregor Drive, St Lucia, situated adjacent to Lot 382 on SL6788.
- (b) Whilst there are differing designs and placement of CityCat terminals within the Brisbane River, they all contain similar factors relevant to whether they were considered a hazard. The differences largely affected the probability of the risk of a hazard being realised. The CityCat terminals were considered to be a hazard because:
- (i) the terminals include buoyant structures, designed to float on water;
 - (ii) a structural failure of the mechanism anchoring the buoyant structures (forming part of the terminals) caused by hydrological conditions could result in the dislodgement of the buoyant components of the terminals;
 - (iii) if one or more terminals became dislodged, it would be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
 - (iv) the movement referred in subparagraph (iii) above, could result in:
 - (A) a collision between a buoyant component of the terminal(s) and other property in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;
 - (B) the loss of one or more terminals;
 - (v) a collision referred to in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);
 - (vi) if any part of a terminal that is not buoyant became dislodged, it would potentially sink to the bottom of the Brisbane River, and potentially cause ongoing navigational hazards;
 - (vii) where a terminal or part of a terminal sinks, there is a risk associated with injury and damage to property as part of the works to recover the thing;
 - (viii) there was potential for a terminal or part of a terminal to collide with structures downstream and create a dam or hazard with other debris, either by sinking in shallow water or becoming stuck on other structures.

Dockside Marina

9. The Dockside Marina:

- (c) is situated at Dockside, Ferry Street, Kangaroo Point, in or around Lot 309 on SL813356;
- (d) was considered to be a hazard because:

- (i) the marina includes buoyant structures, designed to float on water;
- (ii) a structural failure of the mechanism anchoring the buoyant structures (forming part of the terminals) caused by hydrological conditions could result in the dislodgement of the buoyant components of the terminals;
- (iii) if any buoyant part of the marina became dislodged, it would be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
- (iv) the movement referred in subparagraph (iii) above, could result in:
 - (A) a collision between a buoyant component of the marina and other property in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;
 - (B) the loss of the marina or part of the marina;
- (v) a collision referred to in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);
- (vi) if any part of the marina that is not buoyant became dislodged, it would potentially sink to the bottom of the Brisbane River, and potentially cause ongoing navigational hazards;
- (vii) where the marina or part of the marina sinks, there is a risk associated with injury and damage to property as part of the works to recover the thing;
- (viii) there was potential for the marina or part of the marina to collide with structures downstream and create a dam or hazard with other debris, either by sinking in shallow water or becoming stuck on other structures.

The Island

10. The Island:

- (a) is situated at the jetty adjacent to the area known Hansons gravel wharf. The Island is typically moored in this location;
- (b) was considered to be a hazard because:
 - (i) it is a marine vessel;
 - (ii) the vessel was moored in the Brisbane River;
 - (iii) after the water levels started to rise in the Brisbane River, the Island was not able to be relocated as it could not safely pass under bridges downstream and was required to be kept in situ;
 - (iv) a failure of the mooring of the vessel means that it would be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
 - (v) the movement referred in subparagraph (iii) above, could result in:

- (A) a collision between the Island and other property (including infrastructure) in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;
- (B) the loss of the Island itself, if damage sustained was capable of making it unfit for future use;
- (vi) a collision referred to in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);
- (vii) where the Island sinks, there is a risk associated with injury and damage to property as part of the works to recover the Island;
- (viii) there was potential for the Island to collide with structures downstream and create a dam or hazard with other debris, either by sinking in shallow water or becoming stuck on other structures.

Pontoons

11. The pontoons:

- (a) are situated at various locations in the Brisbane River adjacent to both private land and public land. As there are hundreds of pontoons in the Brisbane River, I do not propose to list them out;
- (b) were considered to be a hazard because:
 - (i) pontoons include buoyant structures, designed to float on water;
 - (ii) pontoons also include a pile which is driven into the bed of the river;
 - (iii) a failure of the mechanism connecting the buoyant component of the pontoon to the pile caused by hydrological conditions could result in the dislodgement of the buoyant components of the pontoon either by the structure failing or part of the pontoon floating above the top of the pile;
 - (iv) if a buoyant component of the pontoon became dislodged, it would be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
 - (v) the movement referred in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in:
 - (A) a collision between a buoyant component of the pontoon(s) and other property in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;
 - (B) the loss of pontoon(s);
 - (vi) a collision referred to in subparagraph (v) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);

- (vii) if any part of a pontoon that is not buoyant became dislodged, it would potentially sink to the bottom of the Brisbane River, and potentially cause ongoing navigational hazards;
- (viii) the pontoon itself (whilst intact) is a hazard as it is a structure within the river, which other buoyant material might collide with, or catch onto;
- (ix) a failure of the pontoon can give rise to a dislodgement of vessels moored onto the pontoon, giving rise to the risks expressed in subparagraph (v) above.

Boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River

12. Boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River:

- (a) are situated at various locations in the Brisbane River and are moored in various different ways;
- (b) were considered to be a hazard because:
 - (i) they are marine vessel(s);
 - (ii) they include vessels moored in and around the Brisbane River;
 - (iii) a failure of the mooring of a vessel means that it could be free to move subject to tidal and hydrological influence, within the Brisbane River;
 - (iv) the movement referred in subparagraph (iii) above, could result in:
 - (A) a collision between the thing and other property (including infrastructure) in and around the Brisbane River causing damage to property;
 - (B) the loss of the particular vessel itself, if damage sustained was capable of making it unfit for future use;
 - (v) a collision referred to in subparagraph (iv) above, could result in the potential injury to persons involved in the collision (or multiple collisions) or works to rectify damage arising from any such collision(s);
 - (vi) where the vessel sinks, there is a risk associated with injury and damage to property as part of the works to recover the vessel;
 - (vii) there was potential for the vessel(s) to collide with things downstream and create a dam, either by sinking in shallow water or catching on other things like pontoons within the Brisbane River.

Requirement 2 and 3 – Information and advice received

- 13. I propose to deal with requirements 2 and 3 together, given there is an overlap between the advice I received and the information I received.
- 14. In the morning of Monday 10 January 2011, I received advice from Vessel Traffic Service (VTS) of an emerging flood event through our normal monitoring of the Bureau of Meteorology website. VTS is a function under my responsibility.

15. The Bureau of Meteorology also provided electronic information to us about a flood situation in the Brisbane River on 10 January 2011.
16. The advice was further confirmed by numerous reports from the public that private pontoons and other material including logs were floating downstream and navigation aid buoys were out of their positions. The first reports of pontoons coming adrift and yachts drifting from their anchored and mooring positions were received on Monday 10 January 2011.
17. Observations of the Brisbane Port Office tide gauge at about midday indicated the river at this point was 0.81 metres above predicted level. I received this advice from an officer within MSQ.
18. On 10 January 2011, I was informed that ships at the Fisherman Islands berths were being affected by strong ebb.
19. At 11.14pm on 10 January 2011, I received advice by email from the Assistant Commissioner of the Metropolitan North Region of the Queensland Police Service that he intended to apply for a declaration of a Disaster Situation.
20. On Tuesday 11 January 2011, I was advised about the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) being activated. I am a member of this group, but I was not able to attend in person because I was dealing with the situation in the river and the port. However, in consultation with the Assistant Commissioner, I did nominate one of our Marine Officers, Mr Justin Williams to represent me at DDMG, as the Assistant Harbour Master was on leave (in Noosa).
21. On Thursday 13 January 2011 hydrographic survey results of Entrance Channel and Fisherman Islands berths provided by Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd which indicated serious sunken navigation hazards.
22. On Friday 14 January 2011 and Saturday 15 January 2011 Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd continued to:
 - (a) conduct hydrographic survey and removal of debris from river bed;
 - (b) liaise and discuss progressive hydrographic survey results with me.
23. On Monday 17 January 2011, I received advice from Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd that hydrographic surveys and removal of sunken objects was continuing within the port limits up to Pinkenba.

The Riverwalk

24. On Wednesday, 12 January 2011 I was advised that strategies by Brisbane City Council were considered using controlled explosive devices to free the Riverwalk from the securing arrangements.
25. I received advice (which I relayed to DDMG) from Tug Skippers on 12 January 2011 (who I had put on standby to assist with the Riverwalk being set free) that:
 - (a) the current in the river was very strong;
 - (b) they were concerned about their safety; and
 - (c) they wanted to move downstream given the safety concerns.

26. In the afternoon of Wednesday 12 January 2011, I was advised that the controlled explosive demolition of the Riverwalk was cancelled because it was not considered safe by DDMG and SDCC.
27. In the early hours of Thursday morning 13 January 2011, I was informed that about 480 metres of the Brisbane Riverwalk broke free. I then directed the two tugs to steer the largest section of the Riverwalk clear of all structures. During this process I received various advice from the tug operators about the activities.

The Moggill Ferry

28. Late on Tuesday 11 January 2011, my office received a telephone call from Stradbroke Ferries to advise that both cables which are used to move the vessel from one bank to the other had parted and the vessel was sitting alongside the southern bank. The owners were directed to make the vessel fast as best as possible.
29. On Wednesday 12 January 2011, I was asked by Stradbroke Ferries whether additional anchors could be delivered to them to assist with securing the Moggill Ferry.
30. On the 12th of January 2011 I was advised by the DDMG that the ADF were able to airlift the anchors to the Moggill Ferry. The anchors were airlifted on 13 January 2011.
31. On 13 January 2011, Stradbroke Ferries advised that the vessel had been further secured to the anchors provided.

The Drift Restaurant

32. On 10 January 2011, I put the company Bowen Tug and Barge on standby to be available at short notice. They informed me that they would assist.
33. Late in the afternoon of Tuesday 11 January 2011, I was contacted simultaneously by DDMG and MSQ General Manager about a situation developing with the Drift Restaurant which was and is currently moored at Milton Reach off Coronation Drive. I was asked to provide a tug to assist in managing the situation. I spoke with Bowen Tug and Barge who provided a tug to assist with the restaurant. I also arranged for a MSQ vessel to attend with additional mooring ropes.
34. On 11 January 2011, I was informed that the tug arrived at the restaurant, however, it was close to darkness. I received a call from the Tug skipper, to say that he was not able to maintain position due to the current in the water, and the rise of the flood water. He asked to leave so that he was still able to go under the bridges before the water rose too high, to which I agreed.
35. On 11 January 2011, I was informed:
- (a) That an officer of QPS had arranged for the restaurant to be set free;
 - (b) The General Manager of MSQ was onsite after 5pm;
 - (c) By the DDMG that it was decided to not set the restaurant free, as had been planned by QPS.

36. On Wednesday morning, 12 January 2011, I observed on the news (television) that the upstream sections of the restaurant had been swept away, and partly collided with a bridge (possible the William Jolly Bridge). The restaurant continued to move with the current.
37. I was informed by contractors after the end of the flood event that the two sections of the restaurant which were swept away, were recovered at Fisherman Island.

CityCat terminals

38. I was made aware about some CityCat Terminals being destroyed directly by the flood waters or by floating hazards, in particular, Sydney Street and Riverside.

Dockside Marina

39. On Wednesday 12 January 2011 (late afternoon) I received advice from DDMG, that there was a chance the pontoons could float above the piles.

The Island

40. On Tuesday 11 January 2011 (afternoon), I received a call from DDMG about their concerns for the vessel, the Island, especially in relation to the risk it posed to bridges and other downstream structures if it broke its moorings.
41. On Tuesday 11 January 2011 (afternoon) the Master/Operator of the Island advised that they were ok, but they were monitoring their moorings. I directed the Master/Operator to man the vessel 24 hours a day until further notice, and if there were any problems, that he was to advise VTS. The operator indicated he would comply with my direction.
42. During the evening of 11 January 2011, a plan was developed by MSQ and the assistance of RoadTek and QPS to put additional moorings on the vessel.
43. I was informed by MSQ Officers that on 12 January 2011:
- (a) A crane and truck had been organised to move anchors and blocks to where the Island was moored;
 - (b) They successfully constructed an anchor point on the land for the Island to be secured; and
44. On 12 January 2011, I instructed the master/operator of the island to use his engines to release pressure on the moorings (if any). At this point, the Operator informed me that he required fuel to run the engines continuously (for running the engines for 12 or more hours). We arranged for that fuel, to be delivered on 13 January 2011.

Pontoons

45. On Monday 10 January 2011, we started receiving the first reports of pontoons coming adrift, which the reports continued throughout the flood event.

Boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River

46. On Monday 10 January 2011, we started receiving the first reports yachts, boats and other vessels drifting from their anchored and mooring positions which the reports continued throughout the flood event.

47. Of these reports, I was informed that some vessels sank and some collided with downstream structures.
48. On 13 of January 2011 (and every day thereafter until around 2 January 2011), I had a meeting with the Port of Brisbane (including the Brisbane Marine Pilots), where we discussed:

- (a) Strategies for the hydrographic survey of the Brisbane River and Port;
- (b) Options and timeframes for opening the Port to usual business.

Requirement 4 and 5 – advice given and actions taken or proposed

49. I propose to address requirements 4 and 5 together, as much of the action I took involved the dissemination of information and advice.
50. In the Morning of 10 January 2011, I took precautionary measures and set certain conditions for how ships should be moored at their berths, including the broadcasting of warnings by VTS on marine VHF channels. I arranged for emails to be sent to Shipping Agents and Port users advising of the same.
51. On 10 January 2011, after I was informed that ships at Fisherman Islands berths were being affected by strong ebb, I advised the ships to use additional mooring lines and storm bollards where provided.
52. On Tuesday 11 January 2011, I was advised about the District Disaster Management Group (DDMG) being activated. I am a member of this group, but I was not able to attend in person because I was dealing with the situation in the river and the port. However, in consultation with the Assistant Commissioner, I did nominate one of our Marine Officers, Mr Justin Williams to represent me at DDMG, as the Assistant Harbour Master was on leave (in Noosa).
53. At or about midday on 11 January 2011, I realised that the flooding and flow of the Brisbane River had exceeded anything I had previously experienced and I commenced to take actions including:
- (a) All ship arrivals were suspended for the Port of Brisbane;
 - (b) All ships in port were directed to evacuate the port by midnight on 11 January 2011;
 - (c) Warning and general safety messages were broadcasted on marine VHF channels by Vessel Traffic Services (part of MSQ) at regular intervals (up to 4 or 5 per day, as required) with specific warning for all ships to move to safer area due to the flood conditions and hazards from floating and submerged debris.
 - (d) Vessels such as CityCats were issued with special permits to allow them to evacuate to Manly Boat Harbour;
 - (e) The vessels generally known as River Queens were permitted to move and anchor downstream of the Sir Hielscher Bridge, away from city reaches;
 - (f) MSQ officers were directed to remove hazards to navigation, by having vessels remove debris from the river.
54. By my Notice to Mariners 031 of 2011 dated 11 January 2011, I officially closed the Port to major trading ships from midnight on 11 January 2011.

55. On Wednesday, 12 January 2011:
- (a) safety message continued to be broadcast continuously on VHF marine channels;
 - (b) Discussion were held with Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd to plan for hydrographic survey for Entrance Channel and essential berths such as tanker berths to facilitate tanker movements and to keep oil refineries operating;
 - (c) Port users were advised as required.
56. On Thursday 13 January 2011, a hydrographic survey was continuing and the results of Entrance Channel and Fisherman Islands berths provided indicated serious sunken navigation hazards. Following receipt of this advice, I advised all port users of navigational hazards were present in the Brisbane pilotage area and surrounding waters and estuaries of Moreton Bay (Notice to Mariners 036 of 2011 dated 13 January 2011).
57. On 13 and 14 January 2011, I arranged for aerial operations to be conducted of the Brisbane River entrance to Milton Reach and up to Sandgate, Mud Island, St Helena, downstream from the Moggill Ferry, including Redcliffe. Shore based inspections of the foreshore were also undertaken from Cabbage Tree Creek to Scarborough.
58. On Friday 14 January 2011 and Saturday 15 January 2011, I ensured that priority was given to facilitate movement of the oil tanker to allow Caltex continuation of refinery operations.
59. On Sunday 16 January 2011, I gave the oil tanker special permission to enter the port and berth at Caltex Fisherman Islands.
60. On Monday 17 January 2011 discussions were had with the RAN concerning their support in the identification of navigational hazards. The RAN completed assisting MSQ with the identification of navigation hazards on Sunday, 30 January.
61. By Notice to Mariners 051 of 2011 dated 18 January 2011, following the receipt of advice from Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd on Monday 17 January 2011, I permitted ship movements up to Pinkenba under special conditions.
62. On Tuesday 18 January 2011, after receipt of advice from Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd, I sent out advice to port users to reiterate special conditions put in place for ship movements. Some night movement were allowed at Fisherman Islands.
63. On Wednesday 19 January 2011 after receipt of advice from Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd, I decided to allow movements to Hamilton Reach including night navigation. I sent advice to all port users by email of my decision.
64. By Notice to Mariners 056 of 2011 dated 20 January 2011, after receipt of advice from Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd, I permitted ship movements in the Port of Brisbane to normal operating procedures at Fisherman Islands including special conditions for Brisbane River berths which included additional tugs and ships berthing against predicted tide flow only.

65. By Notice to Mariners 064 of 2011 dated 21 January 2011, after receipt of advice from Port of Brisbane Pty Ltd, I reopened the port to normal operating procedures for SOLAS ships.

The Riverwalk

66. On Wednesday 12 January 2011:
- (a) I was advised that strategies by Brisbane City Council were considered using controlled explosive devices to free the Riverwalk from the securing arrangements;
 - (b) Tugs were placed on standby on site at my direction to assist with the towage;
 - (c) We received advice about the conditions of the river from the tug skippers to the effect that it was too dangerous and not safe for their tugs and crew, this was relayed to DDMG.
 - (d) The controlled explosive demolition of the Riverwalk was later cancelled because it was not considered safe by DDMG and SDCC.
67. In the early hours of Thursday morning 13 January 2011, about 480 metres of the Brisbane Riverwalk broke free.
68. On 13 January 2011, I directed MSQ vessels, Marine Diesel Traders, and PB Towage to guide the floating walkway from critical infrastructure (between the two pylons of the Sir Hieschler Bridge and other critical infrastructure downstream). This was achieved and the walkway was guided to safety and secured.
69. With the exception of one section which is currently being retrieved by Brisbane City Council (BCC), other sections have been successfully removed and secured by BCC.
70. After the flood event, I asked Council to take steps to recover and manage the sections of the Riverwalk which had become dislodged.

The Moggill Ferry

71. Late on Tuesday, 11 January 2011, my office received a telephone call from Stradbroke Ferries to advise that both cables which are used to move the vessel from one bank to the other had parted and the vessel was sitting alongside the southern bank.
72. The owner and operator of the vessel were directed to crew the vessel at all times and to secure the vessel with additional moorings.
73. On Wednesday 12 January 2011 arrangements were made through DDMG to request assistance from ADF to deliver additional anchors to the vessel by helicopter. Transportation of the anchors by road or river was no longer possible due to the flood.
74. The anchors were delivered and positioned by ADF helicopters on Thursday 13 January 2011 which then provided additional mooring points for the ferry.
75. After this point, MSQ continued to monitor the Ferry to ensure that it did not pose a risk to public safety or property.

The Drift Restaurant

76. On 10 January 2011, I put the company Bowen Tug and Barge on standby to be available at short notice. They informed me that they would assist.
77. Late in the afternoon of Tuesday 11 January 2011, I was contacted simultaneously by DDMG and MSQ General Manager about a situation developing with the Drift Restaurant which was and is currently moored at Milton Reach off Coronation Drive. I was asked to provide a tug to assist in managing the situation. I spoke with Bowen Tug and Barge who provided a tug to assist with the restaurant. I also arranged for a MSQ vessel to attend with additional mooring ropes.
78. Unfortunately the tug was not able to maintain position due to the strong current and with the continued rise of river level a decision was made on safety grounds to release the tug so that she can move downstream.
79. In consideration of the rising flood waters and darkness, every effort was made by our MSQ crew and our General Manager who was on site to secure a section of the restaurant to limited strong points available at the site.
80. On 11 January 2011, I informed the DDMG that it was not prudent to set the restaurant free, as had been planned by QPS.
81. Due to the extreme strength of the current, the upstream sections broke free the on the 12th of January 2011 which were swept downstream. The main section of the restaurant had by then sank which prevented it from moving downstream and being a risk to the bridge structures.

CityCat terminals

82. I was made aware about some CityCat Terminals being destroyed directly by the flood waters or by floating hazards.
83. On Thursday 13 January 2011, I participated in an aerial survey by helicopter
84. I did not issue any direction in relation to these structures other than to retrieve those that may have floated away as part of the general recovery process.
85. I was satisfied that the procedure proposed by Brisbane City Council for the maintenance and repair of the CityCat Terminals was adequate and that my intervention was not warranted at the time.

Dockside Marina

86. In the late afternoon on Wednesday 12 January 2011 I was advised by DDMG about concerns with the numerous pontoons floating free off their piles and breaking free.
87. In consideration of reports from the tug skippers that were on standby for the Riverwalk, it was decided for reasons of safety not to send tugs or other vessels to the area. This was passed on to DDMG and accepted.
88. The rise in flood level that night was not high enough to allow the pontoons to float free. However, the height of the water level was monitored to plan for any likelihood of the pontoons floating free of their pile.

The Island

89. On Tuesday 11 January 2011 afternoon, grave concerns about The Island were held by DDMG especially in relation to the risk to the various bridges in the Brisbane River (downstream) if it broke free from its mooring. A plan was put in place to further secure the vessel at daylight the next day.
90. Due to the rapid rise of flood waters, The Island was not able to be moved clear of the bridges and it was considered too dangerous to send tugs upstream to assist. The owner and operator of the vessel were directed to crew the vessels at all times and to secure the vessel with additional moorings.
91. On Wednesday 12 January 2011, MSQ officers assisted by RoadTek personnel took all of eighteen hours to organise and secure the vessel with additional mooring ropes with anchors buried in nearby footpath.
92. MSQ officers consisting of a shipwright and naval architects attended on board to assess the possibility of sinking/scuttling the vessel as an option. This option was discounted because of the complication of breaching the 19 separate compartments within the vessel's hull. Also, post assessment by MSQ Shipping Inspectors was given to DDMG that the vessel was safe at its location and not necessary to scuttle.
93. With the support of DDMG and using MSQ and Australian Defence Force personnel, additional fuel was provided to The Island on Tuesday 13 January 2011 so that her engines could be used to negate the force of the current and relieve pressure on her mooring ropes and anchors.
94. Significant planning was undertaken for the relocation of The Island and on Wednesday 19 January 2011 the vessel was relocated to a maritime wharf (Hamilton Reach).

Pontoons

95. On Tuesday 18 January 2011, MSQ commenced development of property management plan for pontoons.
96. On Thursday 20 January 2011, MSQ released a public notice for pontoon owners to submit claims for the recovery of their pontoons.

Boats or other vessels located in the Brisbane River

97. On Tuesday 18 January 2011, MSQ commenced development of property management plan for recreational vessels.
98. We identified recreational vehicle owners from the registration number on the vessels, and contacted them directly to collect their vessels.

Requirement 6 – recommendations

99. The following is a list of my recommendations, that would assist me as the Regional Harbour Master, to better perform my functions:
 - (a) Any enhanced communication initiatives from the Bureau of Meteorology should incorporate information specifically relating to levels and flows in the Brisbane River;

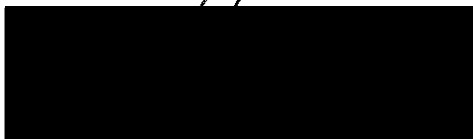
- (b) MSQ should continue to be involved with whole of government initiatives, working towards a solution for better mooring systems of pontoons and other development on/in or near the river such a marine berths, walkway and vessel berths and jetties;
- (c) Enhanced public warning systems using various media sources and communication networks to allow vessel owners and operators sufficient time to fully activate emergency and response plans; and
- (d) Tide gauges, current meters and other appropriate equipment should be installed in various sections of the river so that authorities are better equipped to determined and predict the severity of a flood event. Such information should also be made available to the public through web access.

Further documents

- 100. MSQ has a large number of documents relevant to the above statements made by me.
- 101. If the Commission requires copies of those documents, I am willing to disclose copies of those documents if required.

I make this statement of my own free will believing its contents to be true and correct.

Dated at Brisbane this 18th day of April 2011.



Richard Johnson



Witness