

Norman Fry

From: David Totenhofer
Sent: Tuesday, 25 January 2011 1:55 PM
To: Ian Stevenson; Jason Bradshaw; Norman Fry
Attachments: DOCS-4056265.DOC.DRF

Attached is my report on the Oakey Flood of January 11 th 2011

Jason, can you pass this on to the the Director, Water Services, as they requested to review any comments on Cooby Dam

I am happy to discuss the important issues that will arise from this

David Totenhofer
Community & Economic Development Officer
Community Development & Facilities
Oakey Service Centre

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*"Don't judge each day by the harvests you reap,
but by the seeds you plant". (R.L. Stevenson)*

QFCI

Date: 29/4/11 JM

Exhibit Number: 188

Oakey Flood Report

January 2011

David Totenhofer
Community & Economic Development Officer
Community Development & Facilities
Oakey Service Centre

Disaster Response Co-ordinator Oakey Floods January 2011

128 homes were inundated when the Oakey Creek broke its banks and flooded areas of Oakey on Tuesday 11th January 2011.

An additional 26 properties had water enter and effect sheds, without entering the dwelling. A further 43 properties were inundated without effecting buildings.

At least 10 businesses and community/sporting organisations were effected.

The flooding of the creek was unexpected, and the emergency response was therefore somewhat uncoordinated.

There are c.1250 homes in Oakey.

40 residents of the QCWA House aged care facility were evacuated., 60 residents were evacuated from their homes by Emergency Services, and many more self-evacuated as flood waters rose around them.

Climatic Factors

Rainfall

Oakey, and surrounding areas - including the catchment of the Oakey Creek - received record rains totalling 304 mm in December 2010, more than three times the average December rainfall of 93 mm.

Oakey Rainfall (mm) December 2010

December 2010 Total	39	304.2	19 day(s)
Dec 1970-2008 Average Total		92.9	8.9 day(s)
Dec 1970-2008 Wettest Total		187.5	1970
Dec 1970-2008 Wettest 24hr Total		86.4	1st 1987
Dec 1970-2008 Driest Total		13.4	1977
Jan-Dec 2010 Total		842.4	112 day(s)
Jan-Dec 1970-2009 Average Total		628.6	79.6 day(s)

Source: Weatherzone website > [Home](#) > [Queensland](#) > [Darling Downs](#) > Oakey Ap Daily Summaries
<http://www.weatherzone.com.au/station.jsp?lt=slfc&lc=41359&list=ds> Accessed 20 January 2011

In January 2011 substantial rain began on Wednesday 5th and Thursday 6th January, (50.4 mm to 9am 6/1/2011), continuing over the next few days, with heavy falls from Sunday 9 January to Wednesday 12 January.

Over the first 12 days in January 6 to 12, a total of 329 mm fell in Oakey, 4 times the monthly average for the entire month January.

Oakey Rainfall to 9am (mm) – 1 to 13 January 2011

<u>Sat 01/01/2011</u>	0.0
<u>Sun 02/01/2011</u>	0.2
<u>Mon 03/01/2011</u>	8.8
<u>Tue 04/01/2011</u>	0.4
<u>Wed 05/01/2011</u>	0.0
<u>Thu 06/01/2011</u>	50.4
<u>Fri 07/01/2011</u>	10.2
<u>Sat 08/01/2011</u>	11.0
<u>Sun 09/01/2011</u>	4.2
<u>Mon 10/01/2011</u>	64.0
<u>Tue 11/01/2011</u>	78.8
<u>Wed 12/01/2011</u>	101.0
<u>Thu 13/01/2011</u>	0.0

Source: Weatherzone website > Home > Queensland > Darling Downs > Oakey Ap Daily Summaries
<http://www.weatherzone.com.au/station.jsp?lt=site&lc=41359&list=ds> Accessed 20 January 2011

Oakey Creek

The Oakey Creek runs through the middle of Oakey, crossed by a road bridge on Bridge Street, and rail bridge carrying the main Western rail line, and a causeway on Lorrimer Street.

Oakey Creek is fed by tributaries:

- Little Gomaren Creek
- Meringandan Creek
- Cooby Creek, which headwaters are dammed by the Cooby Dam.

Westbrook Creek connects to the Oakey Creek just south of town, c. 600m south of the Warrego Highway, c 750m west of the Oakey – Pittsworth Road.

Gowrie Creek joins the Westbrook Creek c. 3500m upstream from the above junction, east of Oakey Pittsworth Road, south of where the Gowrie Creek crosses the Warrego Highway, c 2.5 km east of Oakey.

Oakey District Office is not aware of any records being kept of Oakey Creek levels in Oakey, or any other place along the creek to its headwaters at the

Cooby Dam, so some of the following are personal observations and anecdotal evidence. There are flood maps of Oakey Creek in flood in 1986

Oakey Creek rose a number of times during December, with widespread flooding and road damage on 27th December, with the creek almost touching the road bridge (c. 5m).

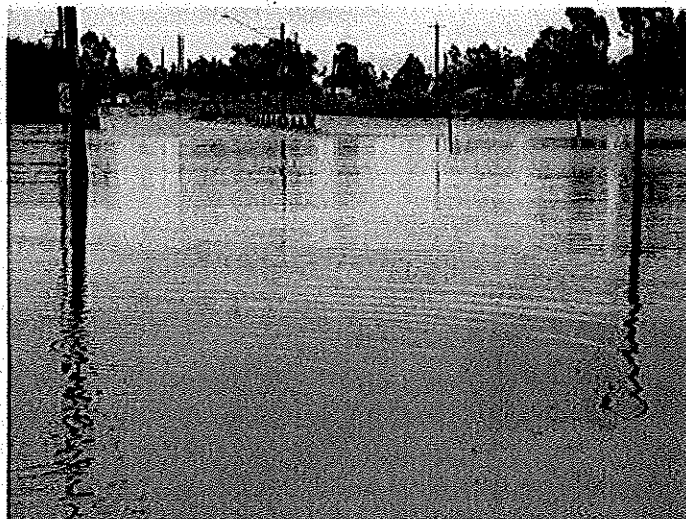
It rose and continued to rise over the period January 6 to 10.

On Monday 10 January at approx 5.30 am I personally observed the level of the Oakey Creek reach **5.45 m** at the gauge at the Bridge St bridge, and then begin to recede. At this point water was not far below the bottom of the road bridge.

The creek began to rise again on Monday afternoon, peaking again at c. 9.30 pm, and receding slowly.

It overtopped the road bridge on Tuesday 11 January, splitting the town in two, and forcing Emergency Services to access the north-western part of town by going out to the bypass and coming back in on the western end of Oakey Connection road.

It reached a **peak of 7.5 m at c. 1.00 pm on Tuesday 11 January 2011**, at which time water was splashing over the railway bridge, and dammed by the railway embankment. Observers say it was 'stepped', at three heights, the highest north of the railway bridge, a lower level between the bridges, and lower south of the road bridge. In this case the height north of the railway bridge would have been higher than the 7.5 m recorded on the gauge located between the bridges.



The Bridge Street bridge over the Oakey Creek in Oakey at 7.5m on Tuesday 11 Jan 2011. (W. Hedge photo)

Doctors Creek

Doctors Creek is a tributary of Oakey creek, joining it near the Jondaryan Golf Course after it crosses the Railway Line and Warrego Highway east of the Jondaryan Mt Tyson Road. It crosses flat plains north of the Oakey Army Aviation Centre. There is some evidence that these waters, and drainage from the Army Aviation Centre may have joined the Oakey Creek waters to contribute to flooding of the northern residential area and north-east Rural Residential area and the Showgrounds.

Cooby Dam

The record December rainfall saturated the catchment of the Oakey Creek, and raised the level of Cooby Dam from very low levels during 2010 to 80% capacity by the by 31 December 2010 (14,000 MI of 18,000 MI).

The TRC Website records Cooby Dam storage of almost 15,000 MI (83%) on Friday 7 January.

Cooby Dam reached 100% and went over the spillway at 7.23 pm on Sunday 9 January 2011, reaching a peak of c.800 mm depth over the spillway in the early hours of Monday morning.

The uncontrolled overflow continued at decreasing levels, then spiked quickly to a peak of c 1.25m between 2 pm and 6 pm on Monday 10 January, then continued to overflow at decreasing, levels overnight.

Cooby Dam spillway overflow spiked again, reaching a maximum depth of 1.55 m over the spillway at 7.43 am on Tuesday 11 January 2011, falling slowly from that peak to a steady 0.1 m depth over the spillway at the time of this report.

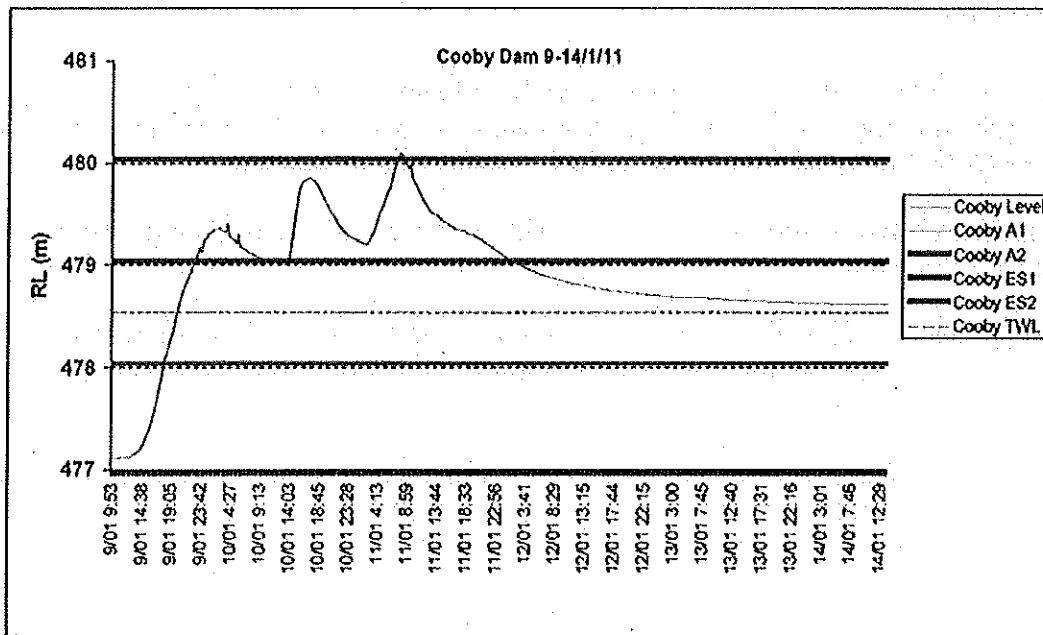
Cooby Dam Storage, 6 to 20 January 2011

Thursday, 20 January 2011	18,592
Wednesday, 19 January 2011	18,728
Tuesday, 18 January 2011	18,429
Sunday, 16 January 2011	18,484
Friday, 14 January 2011	21,284
Thursday, 13 January 2011	21,772
Wednesday, 12 January 2011	22,112
Tuesday, 11 January 2011	26,303
Monday, 10 January 2011	22,461

Friday, 07 January 2011 14,933

Thursday, 06 January 2011 14,326

Source: Toowoomba Regional Council Website > Water > Dam Level History
http://www.toowoombarc.qld.gov.au/index.php?option=com_quanta&view=history&record_id=0&category_id=510&Itemid=478 accessed 20th January 2011



DM 4040303 Dam Level Trends 09011

The Cooby Dam Emergency Action Plan indicates
"Flood event 1 is activated when storage Level is RL 479.04, 0.5m above Full Supply Level and rising to RL 480.04, 1.5m over the spillway crest", and calls for, among others, the Jondaryan (sic) Service Centre Manager to be notified.

At no time during this flood event was the Oakey Service Centre advised of the status of the Cooby Dam. A number of enquiries were made by a number of staff at Oakey regarding the status of Cooby, but the feedback received was that *"the impact that the overflow of Cooby Dam is having on the Oakey flooding is minimal and they have no data on spillway flow v Oakey flooding. Their plans only cater for dam failure."*

Concerned at the rising creek levels and, heavy rainfall, and the forecast for more rainfall, Oakey Police made a call to the Disaster Control Centre at c. 9 pm on Monday 10th January 10th to enquire regarding the status of Cooby Dam and its potential impact on Oakey. They received no return call.

The Cooby Dam Emergency Action Plan indicates
"Flood event 2 is activated when storage Level is RL 480.04, 1.5m above Full Supply Level and rising to RL 481.3, 2.76m over the spillway crest" and again calls for, among others, the Jondaryan (sic) Service Centre Manager to be notified.

Cooby Dam spillway overflow reached 1.55 m over the spillway at 7.43 am on Tuesday 11 January 2011.

As far as we are aware no Oakey Service Centre staff were notified of Flood Event 2.

Toowoomba Flash Flood

Intense rainfall on the peak of the Great Dividing Range north and south of Toowoomba on Monday 10th January caused a flash flood in East and West creeks, details of which will be recorded in other reports.

These creeks feed into the Gowrie Creek which flows west of Toowoomba through Gowrie Junction and Kingsthorpe to join the Westbrook creek just before it joins the Oakey Creek south of Oakey

While this water does not flow through Oakey, the additional flow it caused in the Gowrie/Westbrook creek systems and the Oakey Creek below Oakey would have contributed significantly to 'backing up' Oakey Creek in Oakey.

Climate Summary

Oakey's flood surge was contributed to by a combination of:

- Very high and continual rainfall on Sunday, Monday and Tuesday 9, 10 and 11 of January in the town and Oakey Creek catchment areas sustaining high water levels in the Oakey Creek
- Significant additional flows in the Oakey Creek due to Cooby Dam overflowing on Sunday 9 January, and continuing to do so at higher levels on Monday and Tuesday.
- The spreading of Doctors Creek and Army Aviation Training Centre drainage
- The 'backing up' of the Oakey Creek through Oakey as the huge volumes of water from Toowoomba's floods reached the Westbrook and Oakey creeks, on Monday 10 and Tuesday 11 January.

Impact

Houses and property were flooded along the Oakey Creek and in known low lying areas and drainage channels in town.

The flooding of the Donely/Davidson/Beale/Stanley/Fitzpatrick and Racecourse Roads north of the railway line was unexpected and un-prepared for. It is attributed to the water being dammed by the railway line embankment once the water rose to the level of the railway bridge, and across land flow from Doctors Creek and the northern plains.

- Homes inundated	128
- Property (Shed and Land) inundated	26 (additional to above)
- Property only inundated	43

Significant damage was done to Council infrastructure:

- Rotary Park
- Gordon Park
- Animal Pound and Yards
- Sewerage Treatment Works

And the Transfer Station was flooded, but not significantly damaged

Emergency Response

Queensland Fire and Rescue Service Auxiliary Captain Rodney Mason called the QFRS Communications Centre at c 4.30 am on Tuesday 11 January with concerns regarding the rising water levels in the Oakey Creek. Oakey Police were informed of rising water levels.

As the creek continued to rise an evacuation of potential areas of flooding was put in place. QFRS arranged for Swift Water Rescue trained staff to be deployed in Oakey. Evacuations were required through rising water. The Oakey Cultural Centre opened as an evacuation centre. The first evacuees arrived at c 10.30 am.

Oakey Flood Evacuation Report - Tuesday 11th January 2011

Karen King

Events Co-Ordinator

- Contacted Peter Frost - Oakey Cultural Centre Caretaker at 9am - all OK
- Found Facebook notification - "Oakey Cultural Centre was open for Evacuation to Residents". Rang Caretaker - he advised evacuation had just commenced.
- Spoke to Ian Stevenson (Acting Manager - Oakey Cultural Centre) - received request to come to work.
- Arrived at Centre around 11:00 - Caretaker set up tables and chairs and a tea/Coffee station with softdrinks. There were at least 20 people (inc children). Fay Meadowcraft (Oakey Librarian) was speaking to people and taking names of those evacuated. There were no other Disaster Management Staff in attendance.
- Proceeded to Setup TV/Video for Children, Welcome evacuees, advise of location of toilets, keep tea, coffee station stocked etc
- First Aid was administered by myself to one child who had cut his foot (unknown of where/how incident happened)
- Observed evacuees leaving centre and being picked up by family and friends - this information was not documented and no one was advised when they left the centre.
- Observed Local Fire Brigade dropping people off continuously throughout afternoon with vehicles
- Three personnel arrived from SES and I briefly questioned them as to what evacuation was happening and at which addresses? This was unknown. One SES personnel spoke to me directly and said that "Council's Disaster Management Plan was lacking and that something should be done". I was questioned as to whether other personnel were

assisting or did they have a first aid officer available to assist the evacuees? This was unknown.

- Throughout the afternoon our staff tried to co-ordinate efforts to ensure all evacuees were registered and okay, attempted to give counselling for distressed residents, locate missing residents both from verbal community requests and from people ringing Council to locate them/my mobile, attempted to contain inside Auditorium etc
- It is my belief that the Oakey Cultural Centre was going to be used as an Evacuation Centre on this day and I expected relevant "qualified" agencies at the Centre This was not the case and I was advised around 2:30pm that Residents would be bussed to the Toowoomba Grammar School that afternoon after I was attempting to work out Food, Bedding etc
- Librarian left mid afternoon and took the list of evacuees with her.
- In conjunction with two Oakey Police Officers and One Constable from Dalby (who resides in Oakey) we co-ordinated the evacuation of residents to buses. The Police Officer listed names of all people who bordered the bus to Grammar. This was then relayed through to Paul Reynolds at Grammar who was to meet the residents. Oakey Police seemed unsure of the co-ordination efforts of disaster personnel in Oakey. About 60 residents were evacuated to Grammar.
- Chronicle reporters were in attendance during the afternoon and requested interviews - were referred to TRC Corporate Communications
- Channel 7 reporters arrived - after evacuees had left on buses. Arranged transport for them to Toowoomba.
- TRC Disaster Management Plan was emailed later that day and flooding in Oakey was deemed to be "Low Risk"
- We then received notification that Residents from the local QCWA Rest Home were evacuated to the Uniting Church Hall. Ian Stevenson advised that we were going to house these residents at the Oakey Cultural Centre overnight and that they would be bringing their own medication, food etc. I was not in favour of this as for the Health and Safety of these people and in the event of more flooding, hospitalisation etc being the main issues. It appeared there was a problem with their staffing and travel to Toowoomba. Further discussions took place in conjunction with the Police and the decision was made to evacuate these 40 residents to Grammar.
- Building was closed at 4:30pm

For the future:

- Better **Co-ordination and Communication** of all Emergency Services, Council and key Stakeholder Community Personnel - before during and after a Disaster
- Oakey Cultural Centre staff to receive information as to what the Disaster Management Plan entails and what are our key responsibilities and job roles are.
- TRC's Disaster Management Centre needs to have clear lines of communication with local TRC staff during a Disaster - needs to be

Community Based. Those "experienced / qualified" personnel to be on the ground assisting with the co-ordination etc

On Wednesday 12th January David Totenhofer returned from long service leave to assist in the response to the flood. A team was established of the Service centre Manager, Community & Economic Development Officer, and the Events Coordinator, plus some administration assistance.

Wednesday 12 January

We proceeded to:

- Phone around to establish the stocks and potential supply of food and fuel in town
- Discover the houses effected and what needs they had for cleanup assistance, by going house to house
- Find tasks for volunteer assistance that had been offered
- Connect with existing welfare agencies to collaborate on how to receive and distribute donated items being offered.
- Find out when the evacuees might return to Oakey from Toowoomba Grammar School
- Set up for a Department of Communities Community Recovery team to work from the Oakey Service Centre

Stocks and potential supply of food and fuel in town

- Milk was sold out and wouldn't be available until the next week
- Bread was in short supply – some was coming on, but was soon sold out
- Most other grocery supplies were OK. An offer for trucks loaded with food to be diverted to Oakey was conveyed to the IGA, who gave us the contact details of their head office. This was passed on the whoever within RC was managing that offer
- Cafes were still able to get supplies of frozen ingredients from Toowoomba suppliers, and some reported high demand for takeaway food
- Both Service Stations had adequate supply, and the Oakey Roadhouse as back-up supplies locally it could call on. Ushers BP was saving Diesel for the Emergency Service vehicles

Houses effected, and needs they had for cleanup assistance

- Many houses had family and friends already assisting
- Some houses were empty as the occupants had been evacuated, or were absent on holidays
- TRC Oakey were beginning to pick up flood effected refuse
- During the course of the day, we discovered the Qld Fire and Rescue doing a similar house to house survey, to establish the needs for crews of Rural Fire Brigades expected the next day. We quickly decided to share information and allocate the remaining streets amongst both groups, and get together to share the results of the survey.
- We met with Qld Fire and Rescue mid-afternoon, and agreed

- o TRC Oakey would become the call centre for Oakey flood relief enquires.
- o TRC Oakey would pass on house washout requests to QFRS
- o QFRS would task the Rural Fire Brigades to wash out houses
- o TRC Oakey would task volunteer groups to lift put furniture and other tasks the QFRS could not do.
- o QFRS would pass on tasks they could not do TRC Oakey

Thursday 13 January

- Met with Qld Fire & Rescue for 8.30 am briefing.
- 16 Rural Fire Brigades were deployed cleaning houses
- TRC Oakey and contractors continued collecting rubbish from kerbsides
- TRC Oakey was received many offers of assistance, including:
 - o Volunteers from various corporate organisations, and individuals, were deployed as teams to do furniture liftouts, clean ups etc.
 - o Volunteer corporates with trucks, backhoes, pumping equipment, were deployed on rubbish collection and pumping water from under houses
 - o Offers of household goods, accommodation, supplies were referred to Oakey Lifeline and St Vincent DePaul shops, after discussion with these agencies.
 - o Oakey Hospital Bus was used to transport volunteer crews between jobs
- TRC Oakey co-ordinated the offers received direct by the TRC Oakey Office, matching tasks with assistance offered.
- The widespread disaster situation that TRC was dealing with in Toowoomba, Lockyer Valley as well as Oakey resulted in communication of information for Oakey residents through media and TRC channels was not happening in a timely manner, so flood relief information was posted on an Oakey Community Website (www.oakey.qld.au), and this was communicated through local networks
- A Department of Communities Community Recovery team was established in the TRC Oakey meeting room, and we liaised closely with them as they went house to house
- Catering was set up in the Cultural Centre for Emergency Services personnel and volunteers
- Staple grocery items (Milk, bread, meat, flour, sugar, dairy products) soon disappeared off shelves, but people still seemed to be able to get food
- Fuel supplies remained adequate
- 20 SES volunteers from SA arrived mid afternoon, and were deployed by the QFRS in house lift-outs and moving rubbish to the footpath for collection. QFRS decided to let them go to more needy places, as we had adequate local volunteers.

Friday 14th January

- Met with Qld Fire & Rescue for 8.30 am briefing. Rural Fire Brigades were deployed cleaning houses, finishing all the houses they could gain access to, so stood down by late afternoon
- TRC Oakey and contractors continued collecting rubbish from kerbsides
- TRC Oakey continued to co-ordinate the offers received direct to the TRC Oakey Office, matching tasks with assistance offered.
- A Department of Communities Community Recovery team continued working in Oakey
- Catering in the Cultural centre continued for Emergency Services personnel and volunteers
- Staple grocery items (Milk, bread, meat, flour, sugar, dairy products) remained low
- Fuel supplies remained adequate

Saturday 15th January

- TRC Oakey and contractors continued collecting rubbish form kerbsides
- Some people newly arrived home from holidays to flood effected houses were assisted by volunteer teams with furniture liftouts and house wash outs.
- QFRS and Rural Fire Brigades were no longer working in Oakey
- TRC Oakey continued to co-ordinate the offers received direct to the TRC Oakey Office, matching tasks with assistance offered. 53 new volunteers deployed, including local Oakey youth, a group of Sudanese from Toowoomba, and personnel form the Singapore Airforce.
- A Department of Communities team continued working in Oakey
- Catering in the Cultural Centre continued for volunteers

Sunday 16th January

- TRC Oakey and contractors continued collecting rubbish form kerbsides
- A Department of Communities team continued working in Oakey

Monday 17th January on

- TRC Oakey and contractors continued collecting rubbish form kerbsides until Wednesday
- TRC Oakey co-ordinates lesser numbers of volunteers until Thursday
- Department of Communities team continued working until Tuesday
- Department of Communities ATSI team work on Thursday/Friday
- Mapping and data entry of flood effected properties

Where to from here

The emerging issues will be

- Establishing the extent of repairs required to flood damaged houses
- Accommodation for those who need repairs before they can return to their homes.
- The repair of Public Housing stock (Qld Housing Commission and Goolburri ATSI Housing), and temporary accommodation for their clients

- Funding repairs, i.e. insurance issues
 - o Were they insured?
 - o Will the insurance cover the damage?
 - o If not, how those repairs are effected
- Coordinating donations
 - o What is being offered?
 - o Where can this be stored?
 - o Who is in need of it?
 - o How are those best matched?

Emergency Management

There are a range of issue to discuss within Council and the community, including:

- Flood mapping for Oakey – currently being attended to by TRC Oakey staff
- Early warning systems - information and communication of important information, e.g. Cooby Dam spillway levels
- Improve local emergency management coordination – Oakey QFRS, Oakey Police, Oakey TRC, Oakey SES, Oakey welfare agencies.
- The capacity of the Oakey SES
- Evacuation procedures, centres, equipment (bedding etc) and responsibilities
- Better communication with TRC Disaster Coordination Centre. No Oakey related information was communicated to Oakey Service centre Staff from the DCC.
- Timely flow of information
- Timely and effective communication with the public
- Clarification of roles
- Clarification of policies and procedures, e.g.
 - o Volunteer deployment
 - o Media liaison

Acknowledgements

These people and organisations need acknowledgement for their support of the Flood response efforts in Oakey from where I sat:

- Ian Stevenson, Acting Oakey District manager
- Karen King, Events Co-ordinator, Oakey
- Carl Baxter, GIS Officer, Oakey
- Jackie Henningsen, Trainee, Oakey
- Elizabeth Jones, Acting Community Development Officer, Oakey
- Angela Cowan, Fiona Smith, Renee Anderson, - Customer Service staff, Oakey Service Centre
- Christine Buckley, contract caterer
- Rodney Mason, Auxiliary Captain, QFRS Oakey, and his Oakey QFRS Auxiliary team
- Rural Fire Brigades
- Oakey and Jondaryan Police
- JT Drilling Company

- Boeing – 16 volunteer staff
- Arrow Energy – 6 volunteer staff
- USQ – 30 volunteers
- Coops Job Management
- Centacare Toowoomba
- Singapore Airforce personnel
- Josh Sheinberg
- And numerous individual volunteers

Other Data to support this report

Flood Records Oakey DM 4046132

Oakey Flood January 2011 Map of effected properties

Oakey Surrounding Creeks DM 4060958

Norman Fry

From: davidtot [REDACTED]
Sent: Wednesday, 2 February 2011 1:35 AM
To: Ian Stevenson; [REDACTED]
Cc: Norman Fry; Elizabeth Jones
Subject: Cooby Dam/Oakey Floods
Ian/Jason

I would like to contribute the following to any debrief of the Oakey Flood, in addition to my report

Cooby Dam impact on Oakey Floods

- Almost 200 properties in Oakey, including 122 homes, were unexpectedly flooded on Tuesday January 11th 2011.
- Residents are asking why they were not warned of the potential flooding.
- As far as we can ascertain, this was a record flood for Oakey
- Nobody is suggesting the flooding could have been prevented, but much danger to life and damage to moveable property could have been averted if an early warning of potential flooding was provided
- While no one was injured or killed, many were rescued or got themselves out of quite dangerous situations

- Council has released a statement that attempts to deflect responsibility from Cooby Dam overflows for flooding in Oakey

- As I ended up after the event coordinating a community and council response to the disaster, answers are sought to the following queries associated statements that need either confirmation or denial, so we can attempt to do better next time in warning residents, and incorporate the lessons learned into a Disaster Management Plan for Oakey

1. Was the Cooby Dam Emergency Plan Activated?

The Plan, issued to Council Service Centres and Emergency Services agencies, details water level

- o Triggers for notifying downstream farms
- o Triggers for notifying Emergency Services
- o Triggers for notifying Council staff

2. Who is responsible for monitoring the water flows and creek rises that impact Oakey in this scenario, and for analysing other data (e.g. rainfall) to put together some kind of picture of what is happening and could happen, and making the call to activate an emergency plan?

- o Is this a Council responsibility?
- o Does this role sit within the Oakey Service Centre, or elsewhere - i.e. Disaster Management staff?
- o If the latter, what happens when there are simultaneous disasters across (and adjacent to) the region, as was the case in these events?
- o What happens when key people are on leave?

Council's media statement reads, in part:

"In actual fact, Cooby Dam lessened the flood peak that was experienced in Oakey.

"Cooby Dam held back the flows from at least one third of the catchment, thus lessening the peak flood in Oakey.

"Also we know it takes approximately 18 hours for water from Cooby Dam to reach Oakey.

"The peak flow over the Cooby spillway was at 7.45am on Tuesday, January 11.

"The influence of this peak flow would have arrived in Oakey at around 2am on Wednesday, January 12 but I understand the actual peak of flooding in Oakey occurred around midday on Tuesday, January 11.

Cr Antonio said this tended to indicate that the extreme rainfall that occurred on January 9 to 11 over the whole catchment was the cause of the flooding in Oakey."

Taking these statements in isolation

"In actual fact, Cooby Dam lessened the flood peak that was experienced in Oakey.

3. This may well be the case, but Oakey was hit by a record flood nonetheless, with inadequate warnings made to residents.

"Cooby Dam held back the flows from at least one third of the catchment, thus lessening the peak flood in Oakey.

4. Cooby Dam logs record it reached 100% capacity and began overflowing the spillway on the evening of Sunday 9th January, and continued to overflow at varying levels for weeks afterwards
 - therefore it was no longer holding back the 1/3 of the Oakey Creek catchment that flows into it
 - thus 100% of the potential catchment was flowing into the Oakey creek during the peak rainfall events of Monday 10th and Tuesday 11th January, compared to 66% of the catchment up until Sunday evening.
 - The Oakey Creek had risen to significant heights before the Cooby Dam overflowed. e.g. on 27th December 2010; and at c.5.30 am on Monday 10th January, ostensibly before the Cooby overflow was having any impact on Oakey Creek levels in Oakey.

"Also we know it takes approximately 18 hours for water from Cooby Dam to reach Oakey.

5. If 18 hours for water to reach Oakey holds true on the extreme wet conditions that were apparent during this event, then the logged peak of 800mm over the spillway recorded on early Monday morning, say 3 am, would have reached Oakey late on Monday night, say 9 pm. This is when Police were concerned at the rising levels in the Oakey Creek, and contacted the DCC for information on Cooby overflows.
6. If notification of the spillway overflowing and its quick rise is event was received by someone monitoring water flows, creek levels, and rainfall, in Oakey, then concerns could have been raised earlier, and an emergency response activated or developed.

"The peak flow over the Cooby spillway was at 7.45am on Tuesday, January 11.

"The influence of this peak flow would have arrived in Oakey at around 2am on Wednesday, January 12 but I understand the actual peak of flooding in Oakey occurred around midday on Tuesday, January 11.

7. Cooby Dam logs indicate there was a lesser peak of c. 1.25 m on Monday afternoon, say 4 pm. +18 hours on this peak would be c. 10 am Tuesday morning. This may well have been the contributor to the peak flood in Oakey. While the peaks flows are statistically interesting, the significant continuing flows are important in the volume of water over time being added the already flooded waterway
8. Again, If notification of this quickly rising spillway levels was received by someone monitoring water flows, creek levels, and rainfall, (which was very high on Monday night), in Oakey, then serious concerns should have been raised, and evacuations could have been organised with theoretically up to 18 hours warning, not in response to 000 calls from people with water rising around their feet, as was the case .

9. While the peak flow over Cooby may not have contributed to the peak in Oakey creek on Tuesday 11 January, earlier Cooby spillway flows, which were significant and prolonged, could well have been a contributing factor, and knowledge of these levels, in combination with other climatic data and observations, would have allowed earlier decisions to be made and information to be relayed to residents.

Cr Antonio said this tended to indicate that the extreme rainfall that occurred on January 9 to 11 over the whole catchment was the cause of the flooding in Oakey.”

10. The extreme rainfall was very significant in the Oakey flood, as was the impact of Toowoomba Floodwaters in backing up the Westbrook/Gowrie creeks, but the overflow of Cooby has also to be considered as a significant contributing factor.

The purpose of this treatise is not to apportion blame, but to establish how we can do better in the future, in which case all scenarios must be examined with an open mind and a generous consideration that all are doing their best to serve the communities that we hold responsibilities for and to.

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