

Name of Witness	Susan May HAUGHEY
Date of Birth	[REDACTED]
Address and contact details	[REDACTED]
Occupation	Hotel Manager
Officer taking statement	Stephen Platz
Date taken	02/03/2011

Susan May HAUGHEY states:

- I am a [REDACTED] year old female presently residing at [REDACTED] I am the manager of the Murphy's Creek tavern, also located at this address. This premise is owned by James and Lyn Barnes. I have only been a resident of this town since October 2010.
- Between the 25th and the 30th December 2011 there was a considerable amount of rain in the Murphy's creek area. This caused some minor local flooding that resulted in some road closures but was not too serious. I was not overly impacted by this flooding during this time. I am not aware of any local disaster plan or local disaster co-ordinator for the area. The only emergency service we have is the rural fire brigade which is located next to Murphy's creek.
- I remember at about 12.00pm on the 10th day of January 2011 I was at the Murphy's Creek Hotel. It was raining extremely heavily at this time and had been since 9.00am. I was out taking photographs of the rainwater tank, the downpipes and other areas associated with the drainage of the hotel. I was taking these photos for the owner of the tavern so he could identify any future issues with regards to drainage. I am able to produce these photographs.

Exhibit: Series of photographs of rainfall and drainage issues taken at Murphy's creek on 10th January 2011.

Marked Exhibit No/...

Witness Signature
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Signature of officer

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QFCI

Date:

29/4/11

JM

Exhibit Number:

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4. Someone then brought to my attention that they could see the edge of Murphy's creek rising and was now approaching the park across the road. This water continued to rise and became more powerful. Within minutes, Murphy's creek road was awash. I could tell the flow was quite strong as usually cars would just drive through the flooding on previous occasions but were now turning back. I was quite alarmed at this sight as this is the first time I have seen the creek get this high.
5. Further water was coming from behind the hotel, not associated with the creek, which was also rapidly rising. This water eventually merged with the creek water and caused a large body of water. I then saw one of the rainwater tanks, which I think was from the rural fire brigade building, floating down this flow of water. The water came up to about a foot from the back car park and entered the hotel, approximately three or four inches covered the carpets on the main floor.
6. The only emergency service in our town is the local Rural Fire Brigade. I later found out that their shed with all of their equipment and vehicles had been washed downstream. Adrian Guthrie recovered these vehicles and brought some of them up to the pub. Adrian and other members of his team attempted to fix these vehicles but in my opinion this was a waste of time, which could have been better utilised performing other duties.
7. At about 4.00pm a Queensland Fire and Rescue Service (QFRS) team arrived at the pub with Catherine SCHEFE. I found out that Catherine had been rescued from Murphy's creek and that other family members were still missing. We wrapped her up in blankets and placed her in a safe area. The QFRS then left again to search for more people.

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Signature of officer [REDACTED]

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8. At about 4.30pm the Police arrived and set up in the car park. The police were coming and going and I spoke to them on a number of occasions. There seemed to be lack of understanding as to what was happening. It also appeared that they were having trouble with communications with other police and other emergency services.
9. At about 5.30pm about 30 displaced residents arrived at the hotel. By about 7.00pm there were about 60 people inside the pub that had been either displaced by the floods or were in a general state of confusion. The pub then became a make shift evacuation centre where we provided shelter, food and other basic necessities for the residents of Murphy's creek and emergency services. The power and land line phones were down by this time. Mobile phone coverage is limited in this area at all times.
10. At about 11.00pm the police informed me that another 400 ml of rain was expected during the night. I had to take into account the possibility that we had to evacuate all people up the hill. The police provided regular updates of the situation throughout the night. Fortunately this 400ml of rainfall did not come.
11. Over the next few days the pub became the only evacuation centre for Murphy's creek residents. It was very chaotic and we were having difficulty in providing for the amount of people at the pub. Initially, families were sleeping in the pub but the number of people staying here overnight reduced once they were able to return to their homes. By Thursday morning only one family was sleeping here however there was a constant flow of people arriving getting meals and other provisions. During the first week we provided breakfast, lunch and dinner to all residents and emergency services workers. We had a number of difficulties in providing this service. We had no power to run water pumps, fridges, lights and other

appliances. Alistair MANN, one of the locals, provided his generator to run the essential appliances.

12. There was no organisation of the provision of these services to the community and we did not receive any government assistance. It wasn't until Thursday that two young girls from the council arrived who were immediately overwhelmed with requests. They had no training in disaster management and were not of any assistance. Later on in the week, Ben Lawyer and Peter SOUTER, both army officers, arrived and formulated a plan to assist with the command and control of the pub. They did this in their own time and were not assigned in any government capacity.
13. The town lacked sufficient preparation for such a disaster. The local fire brigade were not trained in anything other than fighting fires and obviously their shed was located in a bad position. Even though they had no equipment I felt that their time could have been better utilised assisting the police due to their excellent local knowledge of the area.
14. There was no warning or suggestion that flooding to this extent would occur. I believe that a lot of the difficulties in warning residents were due to the lack of communication facilities in the town. It wasn't until after the floods that mobile phone reception was reliable. The landlines were cut during the event and it was even difficult for the emergency services to communicate on their radios.
15. The response by the emergency services was good. The police and QFRS were there from the beginning and did their job. It was a very difficult task and they did the best they could. The only suggestion I would make is better communication between the change-over of shifts by emergency services, as we continually had to provide the same information each time new staff arrived. I think that the local government response was poor. At no time did we receive equipment, like

generators, or professional assistance with regards to disaster management. The local mayor Steve Jones never even visited our centre until the Friday. Scott BUCCHOLZ the federal member for the area provided assistance to the community by provided diesel fuel for generators and organised a phone tower to be installed.

16. The community response to the disaster was good but it lacked guidance. We had to organise and manage all logistics ourselves as no government assistance was provided with regards to the management of displaced people, volunteers and donations. Later on in the week we had a number of volunteers arrive and their assistance was greatly appreciated. I was however concerned that some of the volunteers were not appropriate for the circumstances. There was one fellow that I noticed was acting suspiciously around young children. I cannot say for sure but it appeared he was grooming children. I spoke to this male and later reported this to the police. I haven't seen him since.

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Signature of officer

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17. The recovery of the town has been slow and it seems that we were forgotten during the first three weeks of the disaster. We did receive donations and assistance in searching for people but no government assistance was given with regards to the repair of road, bridges and general infrastructure. We relied heavily on the good will of people like Jerry KEOGH who repaired roads and bridges and received no government re-imbusement. The town is now receiving public works assistance to re-build infrastructure but I think that this should have been enacted earlier as the first three weeks is critical in order to get people back in their homes.

S.HAUGHEY

Justices Act 1886

I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:

- (1) This written statement by me dated 2/03/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 6 is true to the best of my knowledge and belief; and
- (2) I make this statement knowing that, if it were admitted as evidence, I may be liable to prosecution for stating in it anything that I know is false.

..........Signature

Signed at MURPHY'S EDGE Brisbane this 15th day of MARCH 2011

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