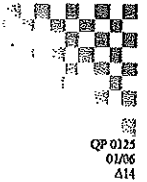




QUEENSLAND POLICE SERVICE  
STATEMENT OF WITNESS



Occurrence #: \_\_\_\_\_

Statement no.: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: **03/03/2011**

**Statement of**

Name of witness: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

Date of birth: [REDACTED] Age: [REDACTED] Occupation: **Station Officer - QFRS.**

**Police officer taking statement**

Name: **ARMITT, Thomas Andrew**

Rank: **Detective Sergeant** Reg. no.: **10407**

Region/Command/Division: **Southern** Station: **Task Force Galaxy.**

**Statement:**

Mark STEPHENSON states that

1. I am a Station Officer in the Queensland Fire and Rescue Service located in the Central West Command of the South East Region. This role makes me in charge of the Ipswich Fire Station on C-Shift on our rotating roster. There are four shifts that operate at the Station.
2. I have been employed within the QFRS since 1996.
3. I have a diploma in Fire and Rescue Operations and a Diploma in a Fire Fighting Management.
4. On the Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 was the first day shift of C-shifts tour.
5. I commenced work at 7:00am that day.
6. At the Ipswich Fires station we have two station officers working. One is assigned to the 645A vehicle which is normal pump truck and the second is assigned to the 645M vehicle which is the Command Rescue vehicle. My role was inside 645M and that placed me in command of that truck.
7. During the morning the morning it was obvious we had a wet day and we had been conducting numerous rescues during the fortnight it was clear to me we needed an extra swift water rescue officer with me that day as I only had one rostered that day who was Senior Fire Fighter Kerry WEIR. Eventually by

Exhibit Number:

QFCI

Date:

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(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

9:00am Station Officer Phil PAFF who is Swift Water rescue trained commenced duty with us.

8. At approximately 9:30am we were turned out to Warrill View to back up 71 station which is Harrisville station to assist with a swift water rescue situation. The basic premise of the job was that the 71 rescue team had entered the area to perform the rescue but while they were there the water rose and we assisted them in removing themselves and their vehicle from the danger.
9. When we completed that job it was around 10:30am and we were detailed to attend Undulla road, Undulla (Southern Ripley) to a swift water rescue incident with 643A, Bundamba and 635K which is the Beenleigh Rescue vehicle.
10. On arrival at the location I assumed command as 643A who had arrived earliest were now cut off by rising flood waters and the partial collapse of the roadway. Senior fire Fighter WEIR, Station Officer PAFF and Senior Fire Fighter Kym STAPLES gained access to 643's location and attempted to gain access to the rescue. It was determined the original reason for the call was no longer warranted but due to the Bundamba truck being cut off we now had to extract via swift water rescue using an inflatable work platform, (inflatable boat) one officer and three fire fighters from the scene and left their vehicle there. We transported the officers back to my location and by this time Senior Fire Fighter Nathan CHADWICK had commenced duty at 12:00pm and proceeded to our location in 645Y to transport the crew of 643A to 45 Station (Ipswich Station)
11. At about 12:30pm we were back in the Ipswich area at about this time 645M and 645A were responded to the Murphy's creek area to assist 678A which is Helidon with a swift water rescue incident.
12. On route to the location as we were on the Warrego Highway in the Minden area more responses for the Murphy's creek area were called in and radio traffic traffic was becoming heavier. We were informed by 678A that they had completed the rescue but were unable to proceed to anywhere due to rising water at their location.
13. 645Y with senior Fire Fighter Nathan CHADWICK was responded the Murphys Creek area one dropping the Bundamba crew to the Ipswich Station.

(Witness's signature)

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(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

14. I asked 678A if they were on higher ground and they informed me that they were and I informed them to stay there for the crew safety.
15. 678A informed me that they had one fire fighter at the corner of Postmans Ridge and Murphys Creek road to meet me on my arrival.
16. On entrance to Postmans Ridge road I stopped the appliances and transferred Station Officer Phil PAFF into 645Y with Nathan CHADWICK. This vehicle is a smaller Mitsubishi Canter vehicle. This was so we could have a break up of crews so each person had a partner.
17. We drove across a small bridge on approach to the intersection of Murphys Creek road and Postmans Ridge where there is an electrical substation. I then set up my command post at that location with the intention of waiting until the water levels had gone down and to task 645Y for one outstanding rescue to be investigated.
18. Whilst at the location I recall having discussions with fire officers at my command post, during the conversations we all noted a large sound which sounded like a loud roaring and asked amongst ourselves what the sound was.
19. I then saw the water in the creeks around us rapidly rising. The small bridge that we had crossed earlier which had no water over it was used as a gauge to check water height and I observed the water had started to rise approaching the roadway.
20. The decision was made to split 645Y and 645M to either side of that creek before it got cut off as this would allow for operations to be conducted on either side of the creek.
21. I instructed Senior Fire Fighter Kerry WEIR to turn 645M around and we were joined by the fire fighter from 678A Danny GIERKE joined 645M. Station officer PAFF also radioed South East Region fire communications of the rapidly deteriorating situation and requested a Senior Officer to the location. This is a protocol situation for major incidents within the QFRS.
22. 645M which included myself, WEIR and GIERKE drove along the Postmans ridge road back towards the small bridge, we attempted to traverse the bridge but within a short space of time the flood waters rose significantly and as we

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preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**


attempted to cross the whole appliance was in danger of being swept of the road and I instructed WEIR to put the truck in reverse to get us out of the situation. We couldn't cross the creek and could not separate. The water rose about 4 meters over the roadway at a speed of at least 60 to 70k's an hour. This placed us at the original command post completely cut off.

23. Immediately the situation deteriorated with high swift water entering homes and properties within out eyesight and the home directly opposite us needed an immediate swift water rescue and a woman with two boys aged about 12 and a teenage girl were rescued from a home by PAFF and CHADWICK assisted by WEIR who had been dispatched to help rescue some horses and evacuate a home immediately to that house's left.


24. I assisted WEIR and returned to the truck and immediately heard 677E which is the Gatton 4x4 vehicle with Captain Geoff DIXON on the radio in command of that vehicle, he had a crew of one officer and two fire fighters. DIXON was in a location between the Warrego Highway and ourselves along Postmans ridge road. I tasked this crew to approach the creek we had tried to cross earlier on the other side as far as they could get and to conduct a primary search and evacuation from the position of most danger back to the highway this meant entering each property and evacuating each property as they made their way back to the highway. I requested situation reports as he conducted this activity.

25. Around this time I was telephoned by Lieutenant Daniel SKELLON who was from Rosewood, he informed me he was in 673A at the BP at Gatton, he asked for information and advice. I instructed him to block the Warrego Highway west Bound at his location and proceed to my location along the west bound lanes evacuating those lanes of all vehicles as proceeding. This meant he had to turn all west bound traffic around and clear the highway.

26. I transmitted to firecomm my situation and my incident action plan which was the situation; "Rapidly rising flood water, one team in action, swift water rescue evacuations in progress, Station Officer STEPHENSON has command." This would be known as Murphy's creek control.

  
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preparing statement)

CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: STEPHENSON, Mark

27. At this time I was in radio contact with 678A, Helidon, they were safe but unable to assist us.

28. PAFF and CHADWICK had completed the rescue but were bogged outside the house and could not move the vehicle. This was eventually freed by a man with a truck and bobcat who was at the location. I know this man to be Jeff NEWMANN from the advice of Detective ARMITT.

29. Whilst at this location residents either drove or walked to me from either along Postmans ridge road or Murphy's creek road informing me of situations where people required rescue. Our movement was restricted due to high flood water both East and West of us on the Postmans ridge road and to our north along the Murphy's creek road and for a period of time we could not access any locations other than the immediate vicinity which at that period of time was keeping us completely committed.

30. People had informed me that they had seen a house go at or around 168 Postmans ridge road and I had calculated from information given to me we had some 11 people missing from the immediate location.

31. I informed firecomm of the situation.

32. PAFF and CHADWICK freed their vehicle and I sent them west along the Postmans ridge road to see how far they could get and they were not able to get past the engineering works to confirm the information regarding the house at 168 Postmans ridge road. They informed me that they could not get to the location nor further along the roadway but from observation the house was completely gone.

33. I had a report of a family washed away and a woman clinging to a tree in Ossians road Murphy's creek near the school oval.

34. 645Y with PAFF, CHADWICK and Jeff NEWMAN were sent to the location of the woman in the tree. NEWMAN was utilised due to his local knowledge. This crew left me at the command post and proceeded.

35. The water eventually receded on the creek on my east and WEIR and GIERKE helped to clear debris from the bridge and allowed access of 677E with DIXON

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

and allowed me to dispatched them up Postmans Ridge road in the vicinity of Dianne Circuit Postmans ridge where I had earlier received reports of houses washed away and people missing in order to confirm the information received.

36. I received a sitrep from PAFF advising of one person recued and taken to the Murphy's creek pub and a child and male approximately 50 missing.

37. I gave a sitrep via phone to Scott BEASLEY who was at the ROCC (Regional Operational Co-ordination Centre) in Beenleigh of what had been going on and I now had information regarding at least 22 people missing in the area.

38. I was approached by two people who informed me that they were in the area on a drive from the Coast. They told me that there was an 18 year old boy up at Spring Bluff who had told them he had lost his parents.

39. At this time 677E had completed their assignment in Dianne Court and on Postmans Ridge road and were dispatched to the Spring Bluff location.


40. Prior to going to Spring Bluff 677E had informed me that there were homes completely gone with only concrete slabs on the ground and others partially destroyed within their assignment area.

41. I also instructed 677E that they were required to clear approximately six houses on route that people had reported persons needing assistance who were in the Murphys creek area and along the way to Spring Bluff.


42. I received a broken radio transmission from CHADWICK that QAS were urgently required at the Murphy's creek Hotel. I made a call via firecomm for urgent attendance of QAS at the Hotel.

43. 678A, Helidon was at this time able to make it to my location. They were tasked with secondary search of premises from my location to the Warrego Highway. This meant a very thorough search of every premises to my east along Postman's Ridge road back to the Warrego Highway.

44. Around this time I was contacted by Inspector David CAUGHLEY regarding fire ground channel and I refused to change I had crews in the field operating on the original channel.

  
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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

45. About 30 minutes later I radioed firecomm and told them I would be re locating to the Murphys creek pub. I was informed that numerous people were at that location with no power and no lighting and no organisation. With the resources on 645M I felt I would be able to provide good intelligence regarding actual people missing and last known location as well as acting an emergency contact and refuge point for all evacuees. This was around 5:00 or 6:00pm in the evening.
46. I was refused this request and ordered to Gatton ICC (Incident control Centre) at the Gatton Fire Station. I tried to contact 677E and 645Y via personal mobile phones and radio to inform them I had to change locations.
47. I then the command post with 678A (Helidon) and proceeded to Gatton via the Warrego highway and we were stopped at the Lockyer Creek bridge on the Warrego Highway.
48. I liaised with Inspector CAUGHLEY at this location and we discussed safety issues regarding the Helidon Bridge regarding traversing the bridge. I felt it necessary to take the chance and cross this bridge and I then drove the truck over the bridge and was followed by 678A. At this location was Inspector CAUGHLEY's vehicle, 676A Forest Hill and 850L which is Cannon Hill. We left that location and 678A was dispatched to another location for another job and myself in 645M proceeded to Gatton.
49. I had earlier received information via Gatton regarding a large flooding event in the Lockyer Valley and Grantham.
50. I then drove to the Gatton Fire station.
51. I met up with Inspector Brian HUMPHRIES who informed me I was to become the operations officer of this incident.
52. My first assignment was to find out what fire trucks were on the fire ground and what they were doing and where they were. This was a very large, dynamic and fast moving situation and it was difficult to track and determine exact movements. I was the first operations officer on scene and it took a while to gain command and control of the entire fire ground.

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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

53. In the operation I was gathering information on what had happened from Murphy's creek, via Helidon and into Grantham and Gatton. I was also attempting to pre-empt and prepare the forward ground in areas likely to be hit with severed flooding such as Laidley, Forest Hill, Brightview Glenore Grove, Tarampa, Lowood and areas further down stream.

54. The IMT (Incident Management Team) at the ICC was made up of Inspector HUMPHRIES, Incident controller, myself as the operations officer, Station officer Bob FLETCHER (645K), logistics officer and Acting Inspector rural Peta MILLER-ROSE, planning officer.


55. I was handed a list of Rescues to prioritise whilst senior Management were detailed out of the incident room to complete phone hook up briefings further up the chain of Command to the assistant and Deputy Commissioner's leaving me as the most Senior Officer in charge of the entire fire ground.

56. I prioritised rescues and dispatched personnel as per the list on a scale of 1 to 3 with one being urgent priority. The list included descriptions of rescues required dating back to 3:00pm and further into the night. All rescues requiring children were prioritised first as priority 1 and rescues where locations were vague or unknown could not be made as it was a waste of urgently required rescue resources were prioritised as priority 3.


57. I was aware of that there were helicopters in the air. I had no direct contact or feedback regarding any of these rescues as this was being run from the ROCC in Beenleigh.

58. Information at this time was difficult to obtain and I co-ordinated ground crews as best I could at the time.

59. I had received some information from the EDMG (Local disaster Management Group) in Gatton regarding rescues to be done, however the best information was from crews on the ground in relation to the current situation on the ground and from a local QAS officer attached to the LDMG.

  
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(Signature of police officer  
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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

60. I had heard via informal channels that there had been a loss of a rural fire appliance and civilians were inside in Grantham. This truck was Grantham 51. It was resumed that there were deceased still in the vehicle.

61. Station Officer PAFF is urban search and rescue trained and was tasked rescue in the Grantham area via Helidon Grantham road.


62. Sometime during the evening PAFF telephoned me and asked was there a Senior Officer and I told him no there was not as I was fulfilling the role of operations officer under AIIMS (Australasian Inter-Service Incident Management Systems) I was the Senior Officer in the IMT.

63. He advised me that he found Grantham 51 and he thought there were deceased persons in the vehicle. I asked him could he confirm no signs of life and he informed me he would need to break into the vehicle to confirm this. I instructed him that I would take responsibility and he was to break into the vehicle and ascertain condition of the occupants and if there was someone alive in the vehicle they were to be rescued, if not to confirm with me the number of occupants. I later heard via PAFF over the radio that there was one adult and two children deceased in the vehicle. Once the Senior Officers returned I informed Inspector Brian HUMPHRIES of this information.


64. I removed the Grantham 51 T card from the T Card holder and held it in my possession. (T cards are an operational device used to inform management of crews on the fireground and the occupants of the Trucks. In this situation the T card only had the vehicle call sign and no details of occupants.)

65. I later in the evening handed this T card to Rural acting Inspector Peta ROSE-MILLER. I also learnt at this stage that the surviving people from Grantham 51 were at the Gatton area office. At this stage I also saw Acting Assistant Commissioner John GRETTY present at the ICC.

66. During that evening and into the morning I was informed that other deceased and missing persons were in the Grantham area. I informed the incident controller of the same.

  
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(Signature of police officer  
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CONTINUED STATEMENT OF: **STEPHENSON, Mark**

67. I learnt later on during the following morning QPS were with station officer PAFF in Grantham.

68. I handed over to Station Officer Shane HOGAN at approximately 01:30am that morning 11/01/2011.

69. I left the fire ground at approximately 03:15am with Senior Fire Fighter Kerry WEIR in EI42 (Nissan Patrol ute) and followed the Forest Hill Truck 676A to Forest Hill and then proceeded to Ipswich station arriving at approximately 03:45am.

70. I took no further involvement in the Lockyer Valley incident, however was back on duty at 09:00 on the 11<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 at Ipswich Station. During that day I in the Leichhardt One Mile area and we performed at least 17 to 18 people who had previously been advised to evacuate but had refused to leave their homes until the flooding arrived and they needed rescue one the water rose.

71. I also set up an evacuation centre at the Ipswich Golf Club and approximately 150 people stayed there during the Tuesday night. I was relieved on this day at 11:00pm.

Mark STEPHENSON

**Justices Act Acknowledgement**

**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 03/03/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 10 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 Yamanto this 3<sup>rd</sup> day of March 2011.

(Witness's signature)

(Justice of the Peace (Qual.)/  
Commissioner for Declarations's signature)

(Signature of police officer  
preparing statement)

<i>Name of Witness</i>	Mark STEPHENSON
<i>Date of Birth</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Address and contact details</i>	[REDACTED]
<i>Occupation</i>	Station officer, Queensland Fire Rescue Service
<i>Officer taking statement</i>	Detective Sergeant Stephen Platz
<i>Date taken</i>	29/04/2011

**ADDENDUM TO STATEMENT****Mark STEPHENSON states:**

1. I am a [REDACTED] year married male presently residing at [REDACTED] I am currently a station officer at Station 45, Ipswich station, 101 Limestone Street, Ipswich. I have been a station officer at this location for eight months and have been a fire officer with the Queensland Fire and Rescue service for the past fifteen years. This station encompasses a district of approximately 400 square kilometres with other auxiliary fire units contained within.
2. I was involved in the flood events during the December 2010 and January 2011 period. As a result of my involvement in the search and rescue of people within the Murphy's creek area on the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2011, I provided a statement to Police concerning the coronial investigation into the deaths of residents during the flood. I am able to produce a copy of this statement.

**EXHIBIT:** Task Force Galaxy statement for Mark Stephenson dated 03/03/2011.

**Marked Exhibit No/...**

3. I wish to add further information to the flood commission of inquiry concerning the events leading up to the 10<sup>th</sup> of January 2011 and other pertinent issues during this time.

Witness Signature [REDACTED]  
Page Number 1 of 7

Signature of officer [REDACTED]

400 George Street Brisbane  
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Queensland 4001 Australia  
Telephone 1300 309 634  
Facsimile +61 7 3405 9750  
www.floodcommission.qld.gov.au  
ABN 65 959 415 158

4. In early October 2010 I was watching news in which the Bureau of Meteorology (BOM) briefed the government that there was the likelihood of a significant wet season in the up-coming months. As my role as station officer I am tasked with ensuring the operational response preparedness, particularly of my shift, so I then set about making preparations for an increased call out period.
5. I subsequently made arrangements for officers in the station to receive additional swift water rescue training. All permanent officers receive a level one swift water rescue training but I decided to conduct additional training through our swift water technicians to ensure that all staff were confident at performing level one tasks . I also caused to have other auxiliary stations within our district to receive extra training also. Due to QFRS regulations I cannot train staff to a full swift water rescue standard and can only provide minimal extra training in this area.
6. In addition to increased training I also had our local swift water rescue operators on my shift to review our local area action plans (LAPS) for areas of high risk within our district. These plans provide pre-formatted information by the way of maps and description of local conditions that enable any swift water rescue to be conducted more efficiently and safely. Some of the areas concerned included Harrisville, Rosewood, Lowood, Laidley and Colleges crossing.
7. These preparations occurred over a two month period.
8. During the month of December 2010 we had received significant rainfall and as a result isolated flooding in areas. I recall during this period we had conducted a number of swift water rescues in areas such as Murphy's Creek and the Fasifern and Lockyer Valleys. These rescues related to people stuck in flood waters either in their vehicles or stranded on high ground. None of these incidents were of a serious nature but it indicated to me that the local environment, due to the prevailing weather conditions, was prone to flooding.
9. On Monday the 10<sup>th</sup> day of January 2011 I commenced duty at 7.00am for my first day of C-shifts for the block period. Also rostered were five other officers, with only

one of these trained to a full level two swift water rescue (SWR) standard. At this time my two other SWR specialist were on leave or on deployment. Due to the increased swift water rescues over the previous month and from my observations from the BOM website, I was concerned that we only had one fully qualified SWR officer working. I then made inquiries to obtain further SWR staff.

10. I first rang Beenleigh station and learnt that they also only had one SWR technician. As a result of this I rang the Duty Manager of Operations (DMO) in order to request more staff. I made contact with the DMO and explained to him that I believed that we might be in for a bad day with regards to flooding and we required more SWR technicians. I requested for an additional six staff. The DMO said they were having a meeting later in the day and would get back to me.
11. I then made preparations at the station and made sure we had all our equipment ready to go in case of any turnouts. At this time I had not received any official warning of any significant weather event; my preparations were made as a result of my own observations as previously mentioned.
12. At about 7.30am I contacted the DMO and again requested more staff as soon as possible. The DMO stated that he appreciated my concern but I would have to wait until the meeting with other senior personnel.
13. I was not happy with this response so I contacted the Regional Rescue Co-ordinator, who was on leave, and asked if he could apply pressure to the appropriate authorities to have more SWR staff sent to the district. He agreed and said he would do what he could.
14. I was constantly on the BOM website which indicated significant wet weather in the Lockyer creek and surrounding areas. I was becoming very concerned as the ground was saturated and it doesn't take much for flash flooding to occur.
15. At 8.30am I contacted the Acting Assistant Commissioner of the South Eastern Region in order to request staff. This was a very un-orthodox method of requesting

staff and not within the chain of command, but I wanted a definitive answer on the issue. I pleaded with the Acting Assistant Commissioner in order to obtain more staff, including swift water rescue staff, due to my concerns of increased flooding and the safety of crews conducting rescue operations. He agreed to provide me one swift water rescue technician.

16. After this phone call I rang Station officer Phil PAFF, who was on days off at the time, and requested him to come in. PAFF is one of the most senior rescue specialists in the state. He agreed and came in not long after.
17. Once PAFF arrived I made inquiries to see if a Local Disaster Management Group (LDMG) meeting had taken place. I found out that a LDMG had been formed in Ipswich but there was not QFRS urban officer or SWR specialist present at the meeting. Our administration officer found out the time of the next meeting and either PAFF or I were going to attend, if no other urban fire officer was present.
18. The events that unfolded at Murphy's creek on this day are mentioned in my Operation galaxy statement. I now wish to identify a number of issues that I experienced during my response on this day.
19. In paragraph 25 of my previous statement I instructed Lieutenant SKELLON to block the Warrego Highway to prevent a potential loss of life due to the 'wall of water' heading to this vicinity. My decision to task the lieutenant to block the highway was overruled by senior staff. I believed I had better situational awareness and re-instructed the officer to conduct this activity and I would take full responsibility for the decision.
20. In paragraph 39 of my previous statement I outline a response by 677 E to Dianne Court, Postman's ridge. The crews had to borrow chainsaws from civilians in order to clear debris from the road to gain access to the rescue locations.
21. In paragraphs 45 and 46 of my Operation galaxy statement I was ordered to go to the Gatton Incident Control centre (ICC) based at Gatton Fire station. I understand why

this decision was made due to my experience within that area of operations however I believe that I was in a better position to remain at Murphy's creek to provide a resource to the local community and to pass on information to the ICC. I subsequently obeyed the direction and proceeded to the ICC at Gatton. On leaving Murphy's creek I still had six fire fighters on the ground and twenty two people reported missing.

22. In paragraph 52 of my galaxy statement I outline my role within the ICC. Upon arrival at about 6.00pm I noticed that there were two swift water rescue technicians conducting an administration role. I thought that this was not an appropriate use of resources and I instructed them to go form a swift water rescue team so that I could deploy them. I was appointed operations officer and went about setting clear command intent within this field of operations. My tasks included; to ascertain the location of fire service personnel and to see if there were any missing; co-ordinate assets; develop incident action plans; and task swift water rescue crews in Grantham, Murphy's creek, Helidon, Bright view, Forest Hill and Laidley. Prior to my involvement at the ICC I was unaware of the staffing arrangements or logistical arrangements at this time.
23. In reference to paragraph 55 I received a list of outstanding rescues from the incident controller and was tasked with prioritising our response to the rescues. Some of these tasks included; a 70 year old man floating down the creek in a car approximately five to six hours ago and thirty two people including twelve children on the roof of a house stuck in flood waters. I then prioritised this jobs on a scale between one, being the most urgent and attainable and three, being questionable information or unable to get to the location.
24. As per paragraph 60 in relation to information concerning the loss of a rural fire brigade appliance and missing people, I wish to add further information. I made the decision to instruct Station officer PAFF, who was now located at Grantham, to break into the said appliance. I made this decision as operations officer as the senior staff were attending a teleconference at the time. I understand that this was out of the scope of my role but I had to ascertain the condition of any casualties in the vehicle.


25. In relation to the accountability of the ICC we were playing catch up for some time as the ICC was not set up earlier. It is normal practice if you are aware of a significant event you set up the ICC as soon as possible therefore improving accountability and tasking on the ground. An example of this 'catch up' related to the management of T-Cards during the flood event. T-cards are a means of identifying personnel and vehicles in the area of operations and encompass all agencies. By the time I arrived at ICC I could not identify where all personnel or appliances were located and I had no current information on the situation. I am surprised that due to this lack of awareness that no fire service personnel were lost.
26. Also upon my arrival at the ICC I noticed that there was a large pool of fire fighters that were basically standing around waiting tasking. Upon being appointed Operations officer I then took immediate action and started formulating them into crews to allow ease of tasking.
27. The communications at Spring Bluff and Murphy's creek between fire units was poor during the flood event. Units were unable to transmit or receive radio transmissions
28. and mobile phone reception was poor also. The appliances are equipped with a mobile phone that is linked to an aerial to the vehicle. These phones are aged and only worked intermittently in these areas. One of our officers had a 'smart' phone which received internet services and we were able to receive updates on weather and other conditions.
29. During my experience I noticed that some of our fire trucks that operated in rough terrain were not appropriate for this task, for example, 645M is a command and rescue truck that does not have a four wheel drive capability and is low to the ground. This limited it's accessibility for its rescue function in areas such as Spring Bluff and Murphy's creek.
30. In paragraph 70 of my previous statement I outline that I attended Leichhardt and performed a number rescues and evacuations. I attended Leichhardt not because of




any assignment but due to my analysis of the flood mapping which indicated that flooding was imminent. I arrived at Leichhardt at 10.30am and noticed that the flood waters were rapidly rising and subsequently performed these rescues.

31. In paragraph 71 I mention that I established an evacuation centre. I made this decision based on dynamic risk assessment of the Leichhardt and One Mile area. At this time I was the only emergency service available and there were multitudes of residents that had inundated and had no shelter. I identified the Ipswich golf club as the highest point in the area with the appropriate facilities. I liaised with Golf club management who were very helpful and they agreed to house the approximately 150 people. I remained in the area conducting looting patrol, further rescues and evacuations until I was relieved at 11.00pm.

32. After the flood event where I had worked for twelve days straight with an average of thirteen hours a day I had days off. Since this time I am not aware of any operational de-brief to the broader service.

<b>Justices Act 1886</b>	
I acknowledge by virtue of section 110A(5)(c)(ii) of the Justices Act 1886 that:	
(1)	This written statement by me dated 29/04/2011 and contained in the pages numbered 1 to 7 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 to be false or misleading in a material particular.
	 .....Signature
Signed at ...Brisbane.....this..29th....day of.....April.....2011.....	

Witness Signature,   
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Signature of officer 