

Appendix D – Curriculum Vitae



Profile

Dr Macintosh has over 35 years professional civil engineering experience with the last 29 years in the water engineering field. His experience is broad and covers specialist investigation, design and computer modelling within the hydraulic, hydrological and hydrogeological fields. Ancillary areas of special interest include the practical application of new technologies, such as remote sensing and satellite imagery, radar for flood warning, and geographic information systems. His work has taken him to a variety of countries in South East Asia and the South Pacific on both aid based and commercially funded projects.

In October 1995 Dr Macintosh established Water Solutions Pty Ltd with the key objective of providing specialist services within the water resources and engineering fields.

Prior to this, Dr Macintosh worked for a number of established engineering consultants including: CMPS&F Environmental (Manager & Principal Engineer, Water Engineering Group); GHD Pty Ltd (Principal Engineer, Hydrology & Hydraulics); and BHP Engineering (Supervising Engineer, Water Engineering).

Dr Macintosh is an active member of Engineers Australia with current responsibilities including Past Chairman of the National Committee on Water Engineering and Member of the Queensland Division Water Panel (Past Chairman).

Qualifications

- Bachelor of Engineering (Civil) (Hons) - University of Queensland, 1978
- Doctor of Philosophy (River Hydraulics) - University of Queensland, 1991

Affiliations

- Registered Professional Engineer of Queensland (No. 3132)
- Chartered Professional Engineer, Australia (NPER No. 24344)
- Honorary Fellow, Institution of Engineers, Australia
- Member, College of Civil Engineers
- Associate Member, Australian National Committee on Large Dams

Fields of Expertise

- River engineering & fluvial hydraulics
- Minesite water & quality management
- Flood risk, mitigation & warning
- Urban stormwater management
- Erosion control & sedimentation
- Design of hydraulic structures
- Water hammer analysis
- Water supply & flooding
- Dam safety & hazard classification

Awards

- 2003 Engineers Australia (Queensland Division) Excellence Award – Research & Development
- 2005 Nominated for the Queensland Australian of the Year Award
- 2015 Awarded Honorary Fellow of the Institution of Engineers Australia

Professional Appointments

- Deputy Chair, EQ (Qld Div.) Sub-committee on Floods
- Committee Member, Int. Symposium on Hydraulic Structures
- Past Chair, National Committee on Water Engineering, EA
- Past Chair and Member, Water Panel, Qld Div., EA
- Adjunct Professor, Department of Civil Engineering, UQ
- Member, 2011 IAHR World Congress Executive Committee
- Committee Member, Qld Division, EA (retired 2004, 12 yrs)
- Convenor, Engineering Practice Sub-Committee, Qld Division, EA (retired 2004, 4 yrs)
- Deputy Chair, Organizing Committee for the 8th Conference on Hydraulics in Water Engineering, 2004
- EA Representative on the Public Review of the Brisbane River Flood Levels, 2003
- EA Representative on the EPA Coasts and Clean Seas Technical Advisory Panel, 2000
- Chair, Organizing Committee for the EA NCWE 25th Hydrology & Water Resources Symposium, 1999

CAREER PROJECT EXPERIENCE

Statement of Relevant Experience – Independent Expert, Brisbane and Environs Flooding

Dr Macintosh founded Water Solutions in 1995 with the objective of providing specialist services within the water resources and engineering fields. In this regard he has been responsible for the provision of expert advice to the State Government, Local Governments, Engineers Australia, mining industry, and Supreme Court. His personal and professional attributes are commensurate with servicing the needs of his engagements with these groups.

Representative selections of activities undertaken by Dr Macintosh that demonstrate competency are briefly presented below.

- Member of the Independent Panel of Experts for the Brisbane River and Catchments Flood Study undertaken for the Queensland Government Department of State Development, Infrastructure and Planning and the Department of Natural Resources and Mines. The panel comprised three experts with responsibility to review and advise on all technical aspects of the study.
- Deputy Chair of Engineers Australia, Queensland Division Sub-committee on Floods. This committee was formed by EA to review and advise on the proceedings of the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry (2011-2012), to make submission to the commission on behalf of EA, to assist with the preparation of media releases on behalf of EA, to review and advise on submissions made directly to EA, and to advise EA on other flood related issues upon request.
- Invited by Brisbane City in 2003 to sit on an expert panel to review Brisbane River flood modelling and make recommendations for future actions. The panel was Chaired by Professor Mein, with other members comprising Professor Apelt and Weinmann.
- Invited by Moreton Bay Regional Council in 2009 to sit on their study advisory group (SAG) for their Floodplain Regional Database Project. The SAG was formed at study inception and continues to meet with Council as the project moves to completion. The outcomes of this project will provide a substantial information data base to Council engineers and planners, emergency services and the community.
- Engaged by Burnett Water Pty Ltd in 1999 to provide engineering advice in connection with the inception, design and construction of a weir on the Burnett River near Eidsvold, Queensland. A particularly interesting aspect of this project was the use of physical modelling, not only for hydraulic design purposes, but also as a means of physically exploring issues of fish passage to the satisfaction of the Department of Fisheries.
- Engaged by DERM in 2011 to provide them with expert advice in connection with the redrafting of their proposed Manual for Assessing Hazard Categories and Hydraulic Performance of Dams. This work involved identifying stakeholder requirements (DERM and the mining industry) and the development of an improved technical and regulatory methodology that was satisfactory to all parties. Stakeholder meetings were held to discuss the various issues and share ideas. The revised Manual and accompanying Guideline was issued in January 2012.
- Engaged by the Department of Natural Resources and Water (NRW) in 1998 to undertake investigations into the viability of a proposed integrated climate / water resource research program. Investigations involved extensive engagement with both national and international research stakeholders, culminated in positive recommendations.
- Engaged by the NRW in 1998 to undertake an assessment of surface and groundwater resources of the Central Lockyer Valley. The review included both a technical audit of resources and a demand management survey. Community meetings were conducted as a means of engaging with agricultural stakeholders to both gain information and share outcomes.
- Engaged by the Department of Science, Information, Technology Innovation & the Arts (DSITA) to undertake technical audits of various IQQM models, including: Burnett River Basin, Burdekin River, and the Brisbane and Pine Rivers. The scope of this work involved both desktop review and direct interview of selected modelling personnel at DSITA.

CAREER PROJECT EXPERIENCE

- Invented a new technique for the stabilisation of steep rock filled waterways constructed over unconsolidated fill. The prototype design was incorporated as the centre point of a permanent waterway diversion comprising a 100m long stepped cascade at 10% longitudinal slope. Not only was the new technique more cost-effective to build than alternatives but it's operational service has proved successful. In 2003 Water Solutions received an Engineering Excellence Award from Engineers Australia in the category of Research and Development for this project.

It is also of relevance to note that:

- Dr Macintosh is a long-term resident of Brisbane since 1966. He has firsthand experience of all major flooding events and their associate climatic conditions.
- He has been an associate supervisor of two full-time PhD students at the University of Queensland.
- He is a past Adjunct Professor within the Department of Civil Engineering at the University of Queensland.
- He currently leads an extensive research and development program within Water Solutions which is registered with the Australian Taxation Office. The general theme of this program concern hydrological uncertainty, risk management, real-time information technology and systems for environmental protection.
- His PhD research was specifically directed towards the hydraulics of river flow. This work was undertaken full time at the University of Queensland. It was commenced after Dr Macintosh had already worked as a professional engineer for around 10 years and received full membership of Engineers Australia, and registration as an RPEQ.

Statement of Relevant Experience – Hydraulic Design

Dr Macintosh founded Water Solutions in 1995 with the objective of providing specialist services within the water resources and engineering fields. In this regard he has been responsible for the provision of expert advice to the State Government, Local Governments, Engineers Australia, mining industry, and Supreme Court. His personal and professional attributes are commensurate with servicing the needs of his engagements with these groups.

A representative selection of activities undertaken by Dr Macintosh that demonstrate competency are briefly presented below.

- Inception, design and construction review of a significant upgrade to a water supply and management system for Callide Mine, Queensland. The system comprised over 15km of pipeline, 4 automatic pumping stations, one clay core dam and one “turkey's” nest storage.
- Design of a deep-mine dewatering system to empty an abandoned mine. The mine, located in Gympie, Queensland was accessed via a 500m deep vertical shaft which was flooded to near surface level. A high capacity two staged pump system was designed which was lowered into position from the surface. The system also included direct feed to a long discharge line with outlet control valve. Transient analysis was undertaken to define safe shutdown operating rules to guard against the possible occurrence of any reverse thrust on pump bearings.
- Design of a “Morning Glory” type drop shaft spillway and pressurized outlet tunnel for High Level Lake at Springfield, Queensland. This spillway was a non-standard design in that outlet tunnels for this form of spillway are usually open to the atmosphere. However, the design brief for the project required that the outlet tunnel be submerged and additional features were therefore included for the venting of entrained air within the submerged outlet tunnel.
- Engaged by Burnett Water Pty Ltd in 1999 to provide engineering advice in connection with the inception, design and construction of a weir on the Burnett River near Eidsvold, Queensland. A particularly interesting aspect of this project was the use of physical modelling, not only for hydraulic design purposes, but also as a means of physically exploring issues of fish passage to the satisfaction of the Department of Fisheries.

CAREER PROJECT EXPERIENCE

- Concept design of 16km slurry pipeline to service proposed nickel mining operations at Koniambo, New Caledonia. The route of the pipeline extended approximately 16km from the proposed mine industrial area to the port industrial area at Vavouto.
- Engaged by DERM in 2011 to provide them with expert advice in connection with the redrafting of their proposed Manual for Assessing Hazard Categories and Hydraulic Performance of Dams. This work involved identifying stakeholder requirements (DERM and the mining industry) and the development of an improved technical and regulatory methodology that was satisfactory to all parties. Stakeholder meetings were held to discuss the various issues and share ideas. The revised Manual and accompanying Guideline was issued in January 2012.
- Invented a new technique for the stabilisation of steep rock filled waterways constructed over unconsolidated fill. The prototype design was incorporated as the centre point of a permanent waterway diversion comprising a 100m long stepped cascade at 10% longitudinal slope. Not only was the new technique more cost-effective to build than alternatives but it's operational service has proved successful. In 2003 Water Solutions received an Engineering Excellence Award from Engineers Australia in the category of Research and Development for this project.

Appendix E – Letters of Instruction

Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

Reference number: TF/15/12589

Dr John Macintosh
Water Solutions Pty Ltd
john.mac@watersolutions.com.au

Dear Dr Macintosh

Engagement as hydrology expert for the Grantham Floods Commission

Instructions Letter #1

The Commission has, to date, identified a number of hypotheses raised by interested persons as to possible factors which may have altered, contributed, caused or materially impacted on the flooding at Grantham on 10 January 2011.

The hypotheses identified to date are summarised below. For the purposes of your report, you are instructed to consider each of these hypotheses and express your opinion as to the likelihood that the identified factor altered, contributed, caused or materially impacted on the flooding at Grantham on 10 January 2011.

You are also instructed to consider the additional possible contributing factors identified at the conclusion of this letter and express your opinion as to the likelihood that the identified factor altered, contributed, caused or materially impacted on the flooding at Grantham on 10 January 2011.

This is not intended to limit your consideration of other possible factors that may have caused or contributed to the flooding at Grantham on 10 January 2011.

Where relevant, for each hypothesis we have identified the source material where the hypothesis was raised in published articles or was considered at an earlier time. However, for the purposes of your report, you are instructed to consider the hypothesis; it is not necessary for you to expressly address the source of the hypothesis or earlier consideration of the hypothesis unless you consider that necessary, or of assistance, for the purposes of your consideration of the hypothesis itself.

First hypothesis: That the vegetation in the watercourse contributed to the damage of the flood in Grantham

This hypothesis was raised by Mr Martin Warburton and was referred to in the article entitled “*Opinions divided on flood report in the Lockyer Valley*”, a copy of which is attached and marked “1” to this letter.

Relevantly, during the hearing before the Queensland Floods Commission of Inquiry on 18 April 2011, Dr Phillip Jordan, a Senior Hydrologist for SKM, was asked to address this hypothesis. An excerpt from the transcript containing the questions asked of Dr Jordan and Dr Jordan's responses on this issue are attached and marked "2" to this letter.

Second hypothesis: That the quarry had a marginal impact or reduced the flooding in Grantham

This hypothesis has been drawn from the Sinclair Knight Merz (SKM) report concerning the impact of quarrying operations at Grantham dated 16 September 2011 (SKM Quarry Report). In particular, it has been drawn from the following conclusions at page 36 of that report with respect to the quarry:

1. it mitigated the impact of flooding through the town area of Grantham, with peak flood levels reduced by between 0.04m and 0.1m;
2. it had no impact on peak flood velocities through Grantham, with maximum simulated velocities different by less than 0.01m/s across the Grantham town area between the pre-quarry terrain as against post quarry terrain (and breach of the quarry wall);
3. it resulted in flows being attenuated such that the rising limb was delayed by 10 minutes; and
4. water levels in the town of Grantham were delayed by the presence of the quarry because it caused more of the floodwater to travel along the longer route of the main Lockyer Creek channel. Ultimately, the rising limb in town was delayed by 5 minutes.

In addition, relevant to this hypothesis, Denis Wagner has made statements to the following effect:

1. the quarry pit acted as a flood mitigation structure – it took water out of the flood which reduced the water that flowed downstream; and
2. the breach was on the upstream side of the quarry which meant the water flowed through the breaches into the quarry, not out of it; and
3. the quarry did not alter the flow in the creek surrounding it.

The statements made by Mr Wagner are recorded in two articles – "*Quarry family firm: let's get the facts but our hands are clean*" (attached and marked "3") and "*Grantham Flood Findings Flawed*" (attached and marked "4").

Third Hypothesis: That the quarry wall had a material impact or significantly contributed to the flooding in Grantham

This hypothesis focuses on the collapse of the quarry wall and the effect of that collapse on the flooding in Grantham. In summary, the hypothesis is that when the quarry wall collapsed it released a substantial volume of water that travelled down to Grantham at high velocity and depth.

There have been a number of news articles concerning this hypothesis, each of which broadly identifies the following elements of the hypothesis:

- (a) that when the water in the Lockyer Creek hit the quarry wall, the wall altered the natural course of the water down the creek;
- (b) the course of the water was altered in such a manner that water then built up behind the quarry wall over a lengthy period – possibly between 30 minutes to 1 hour; and
- (c) that the quarry wall then collapsed which released a substantial volume of water at a high speed which then travelled down to Grantham.

A bundle of those news articles raising this hypothesis is attached and marked “5” to this letter. In addition, a report by “60 Minutes” will be placed on the SharePoint site.

Relevant to this hypothesis, is a further matter raised by DHI in its report dated 10 January 2011 reviewing the impact of the quarry (**DHI Report**), a copy of which has previously been provided. DHI suggests that the collapse of the wall was marked by four separate breaches with a combined flow width of 260m (page 12 of the report). This is different to the apparent premise of the SKM Quarry Report which is that there was one breach of approximately 55m in width.

Fourth Hypothesis: That the railway embankment contributed to or altered the flooding in Grantham

One specific form of this general hypothesis is that a lack of appropriate culverts under the railway line caused the water to be “tunnelled” or “channelled” into Grantham; if those culverts had been installed, the water would have flowed through or over the railway line and that in turn, would have reduced the extent of flooding.

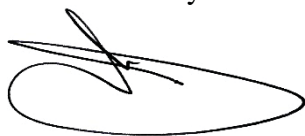
The specific form of the general hypothesis has been raised in two articles entitled “*Rickuss: Did the flood teach them nothing?*” and “*Mayor backs new flood probe*”. Copies of those articles are attached and marked “6” and “7” to this letter.

Other possible factors

In addition to the above hypotheses, we request that you also consider the impact of the following other factors on the Grantham floods:

- (a) the roads and streets of Grantham and, in particular, the effect of Gatton-Helidon Road;
- (b) the bridges surrounding Grantham and, in particular, the effect of the Flagstone Road Bridge; and
- (c) the sedimentation of any relevant creeks downstream from the quarry and its impact on water speed, velocity and direction.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, consisting of a large, stylized loop at the bottom and several overlapping strokes above it.

Joanne Paterson
Director
Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

[Return to List](#)

69 of 86 DOCUMENTS



ABC Premium News (Australia)

August 1, 2011 Monday 8:06 PM AEST

Opinions divided on **flood** report in **Lockyer** Valley

LENGTH: 350 words

Opinions on Queensland's **Flood** Commission of **Inquiry** interim report are divided in the **Lockyer** Valley, west of Brisbane, where more than a dozen people died in the January flash **flood**.

The commission has recommended the installation of alarm-activated reporting gauges in creeks in the Lockyer.

It says removing debris from local waterways is also vital to preventing another flood disaster.

Mayor Steve Jones says the council is well on the way to implementing those changes but money is an issue.

"There's logs there 60- or 70-feet long and it will cost a lot of money to remove them," he said.

Grantham service station owner Marty Warburton has welcomed parts of the report but says there are more questions than answers.

"The initial response: our State Government was caught with its pants down," he said.

He says Grantham residents want the report's recommendation on early-warning systems implemented immediately and that basic measures will help protect the region.

"My personal opinion is that 80 per cent of the damage caused to our dwellings and our infrastructure in Grantham here was caused by the overgrowth and rubbish and mismanagement of our waterways," he said.

The commission on Monday handed down 175 recommendations as part of its investigation into the state's summer disaster, among them a call for an immediate review of the operations manual for Brisbane's Wivenhoe Dam.

It also called on councils in flood-prone areas to run detailed education programs before the next wet season.

The report says residents need more information about flood preparation, emergency contacts and how to

Opinions divided on flood report in Lockyer Valley ABC Premium News (Australia) August 1, 2011 Monday
8:06 PM AEST

join the SES.

It says templates for mobile phone alerts need to be prepared and warning sirens could be used in some areas.

Local Government Association spokesman Greg Hallam says councils have three months to act.

"It is a high bar that's been set, but one we're going to have a crack at," he said.

The interim report also outlines ways councils can better inform residents about the flood risk to their homes. Suggestions include flood markers, colour-coded maps and individual information on rates notices.

LOAD-DATE: August 2, 2011

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newswire

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Okay?-- Yep.

Now, the next question is: we have looked at the path of the water. Why did it hit these communities with such intensity?-- It really hit these communities with such intensity simply because the rainfall intensities were so large and it was a combination of those high rainfall intensities occurring on steep, saturated catchments that generated run-off so quickly, that caused the flooding to be at such large flow rates, high velocities and large depth of the flow.

Your report also looks at the possible influences on the water velocity and direction by infrastructure and other possible matters like the quarry?-- Yes.

I am going to take you through a few of those?-- Yep.

Could you tell us, if any, what was the influence on the water velocity and direction caused by vegetation in the creeks?-- So, in general, my assessment would be that the magnitude of this event was so large that it stripped a large amount of vegetation from the creek bed and banks. It also stripped vegetation from flood plain areas and even areas that would be considered outside of normal waterways and flood plains due to land slips and those sorts of things that have - are documented to have occurred within the catchment. The vegetation, once it's mobilised within the stream, will move downstream with the water flow. Some of that vegetation was found on structures such as culverts and bridges during the flood event.

Does that have an influence when it hits these culverts and bridges?-- It will have a local influence when it hits those culverts and bridges, so any vegetation or debris that gets caught against a culvert will have some effect in backing up water behind that structure. The hydraulic influence depends on how much - how much vegetation is caught and depends on the flow rates and the hydraulics, the other hydraulic parameters that govern that crossing.

So, is it your opinion that any vegetation that were in creeks or waterways had little influence on the direction of the water?-- It's - the vegetation that was removed from the creeks or waterways would have been removed very early in the flood event. It would have contributed along with other vegetation that was stripped off areas that are not normally considered waterways, so it would have had - would have contributed to some extent, but it's difficult to establish how much the - how much the vegetation that was stripped out of the waterways contributed compared with vegetation that was removed from other areas. I think, though, it's fair to say that the magnitude of this event was so large that the relative impact of - in general, the relative impact of vegetation stripped from the creek bed and banks is - would be minor compared with the - all of the other debris that was washed down during the event.

[Return to List](#)

31 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian

March 7, 2015 Saturday
Australian Edition

Quarry family firm: let's get the facts but our hands are clean

BYLINE: Hedley Thomas

SECTION: THENATION; Pg. 8

LENGTH: 416 words

FOR the Wagner family, one of the most successful in the region, the persisting claims that their excavation operation contributed to the devastation, and possibly even fatalities, have been hurtful and hard to shake.

The Wagners are big employers, hardworking, and well regarded in the Lockyer Valley and west up the range to Toowoomba.

The issue has been divisive. While some still point to the quarry and its embankment as culprits, the Wagner family is just as adamant that the deep pit from which they dug out great loads of sand had slowed the **flood** by taking a huge volume of its water.

Denis Wagner, the head of the quarry operations before his family sold it to Boral after the **flood**, has repeatedly rejected accusations that the embankment was both man-made and played a deadly role in the **flood**. There have been other claims of cover-up and culpability.

Mr Wagner said yesterday: "These allegations have been concerning because some people may believe them.

"We have never had any issues about being held accountable for our actions. But we take exception to false and misleading allegations." According to Mr Wagner, the embankment wall of soil surrounding the quarry is not man-made, but natural. The claim is strenuously challenged by some locals who insist the high earthen wall, in alignment with the creek, was built relatively recently. "The flows in the creek have never been altered," Mr Wagner said.

"During the event in question the **quarry** pit acted as a **flood** mitigation structure because what it did was reduce the water that flowed downstream." Responding to a study by hydraulic engineering firm DHI, which has reported that the breach in the **embankment** wall was about five times larger than described in the official **floods** inquiry and hydrology reports, Mr Wagner said the breach was on the upstream side of the **quarry**, meaning the water flowed through the breaches into the **quarry**, not out of the **quarry**, therefore reducing the **flood** impact at **Grantham**, not adding to it. "This new report clearly states that the **flood** impact at **Grantham** would have been substantial in all cases irrespective of whether the **quarry** was present or not," Mr Wagner said. "There has been a lot of hydrology and engineering work done since the **flood**, and the results have been clear in saying that the quarry did not contribute to any loss or damage in the township. We have never tried to hide or impede any investigation into this. We will have no issue at all if these things are re-examined."

Quarry family firm: let's get the facts but our hands are clean The Australian March 7, 2015 Saturday

LOAD-DATE: March 6, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: The Australian

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[Return to List](#)

19 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Courier Mail (Australia)

March 11, 2015 Wednesday
CourierMail Edition

Owner of quarry 'will assist' any new inquiry

BYLINE: Jason Tin

SECTION: NEWS; Pg. 4

LENGTH: 270 words

THE owner of a **quarry** at the centre of renewed debate about the impact of the January 2011 **floods** in **Grantham** says he has "no fear" of a fresh inquiry and is happy to co-operate if called upon to do so.

It comes as independent MP and soon-to-be Speaker Peter Wellington throws his support behind a new inquiry off the back of the findings of a report which re-examined the possible role a **quarry embankment** may have played in the deadly **flood** that left **Grantham** devastated.

Denis Wagner, whose family owned Wagner's Quarry at the time of the **flood**, yesterday said a fresh inquiry "may give the people that have these concerns some closure", but he had "no fear of that".

"If there were a fresh inquiry, we would be more than happy to co-operate and assist in any way we can," he said.

"We really have no fear of a fresh inquiry because I think the reality of it is ... if you understand the flow of that water and the fact that we had an off-stream pit. Before the **flood**, the pit was empty. After the **flood**, the pit was full.

"What that really means is that the pit took that amount of water out of the **flood**, which in fact delayed the impact of the **flood** on the township of **Grantham** and reduced the level and that was established by the hydraulic models." Mr Wellington said the findings of the report and the doubt they potentially cast over the original findings of the **flood** inquiry could warrant a second examination. "I understand the inquiry made a conclusive finding that none of the earthworks associated with the **quarry** upstream from **Grantham** caused or contributed to the **flooding** and the loss of life," he told the ABC.

LOAD-DATE: March 10, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: The Courier-Mail

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[Return to List](#)

9 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian

May 6, 2015 Wednesday
Australian Edition

New hope in pursuit of truth about the wall of water that destroyed a town

BYLINE: Sarah Elks, Hedley Thomas

SECTION: THENATION; Pg. 8

LENGTH: 637 words

New hope in pursuit of truth

Grantham residents and relatives of those killed by one of Australia's deadliest **floods**, along with the former owners of a controversial **quarry**, hope a fresh inquiry into the disaster will finally deliver the truth.

Queensland Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk yesterday ordered a new independent commission of inquiry into the 2011 Grantham flash **flood**, which killed 12 people, swept away homes and destroyed the livelihoods of more than 50 families.

Ms Palaszczuk said the powerful inquiry was prompted by The Australian's revelation in March that **flood** victims may have been exposed to greater risk by the collapse of a long section of an **embankment** beside the **Grantham quarry**, in southeast Queensland's **Lockyer** Valley.

The fresh inquiry marks the second time the original **floods** commission of inquiry's position has been called into question and reinvestigated. In early 2012, Commissioner Cate Holmes was forced to reopen public hearings after The Australian revealed new evidence about the operation of Wivenhoe Dam. **Flood survivors in Grantham have long alleged that the collapse of the earthen wall caused a sudden, large torrent that made escape perilously difficult.**

Resident Kenley Arndt, 76, said he had no doubt the quarry's wall held back **floodwaters** that became an even more dangerous and towering wall of water.

Mr Arndt and his wife, Frances, 68, were forced to cling to a tree for three hours, as the **floodwaters** swirled around them, before being rescued by a helicopter. Their beloved Grantham home was destroyed, and Mr Arndt said he also lost \$500,000 worth of uninsured farm equipment from his backyard shed. The terror of the **flood** haunts him even now. "It plays on my mind all the time," he said. "I start breaking down." Mr Arndt said he hoped the new inquiry would deliver -answers, and perhaps lead to -compensation.

The new commission of inquiry was ordered after The Australian commissioned a study by experts DHI, who cast doubt on findings of the wide-ranging Queensland **Floods** Commission of Inquiry. The inquiry's 2012 report found that none of the earthworks associated with the **quarry** "caused or contributed" to the **flooding** of **Grantham** on January 10, 2011. In fact it found the presence of the earthworks at the **quarry**, owned then by Toowoomba-based Wagner Brothers, helped slow **floodwaters** racing towards **Grantham**. The DHI report concluded the inquiry underestimated the extent of the collapse of the embankment.

New hope in pursuit of truth about the wall of water that destroyed a town The Australian May 6, 2015
Wednesday

Denis Wagner, a Toowoomba businessman whose family company owned and operated the quarry at the time of the **flood** in January 2011, said he welcomed the new commission of inquiry. "It remains the case that if we can offer any assistance to this inquiry, we will," he said.

"Let's get all the facts out on the table and examine them properly and put this to bed once and for all. We are relatively comfortable and confident with the facts as we know them - that our property there did not contribute to the **flood** at **Grantham**." Adding to the intrigue, the Wagners say the **embankment** was part of the natural landscape, while some locals insist it was man-made.

Ms Palaszczuk told parliament yesterday that Grantham residents had supported the findings of the DHI report. "The people of Grantham want the truth and that's why my government is launching this commission of inquiry," the Premier said.

Former Queensland solicitor-general Walter Sofronoff QC, one of Queensland's most senior silks, will lead the new probe, which will begin gathering evidence next week and end on August 31, allowing more independent hydrological modelling to be done. The government also ordered an inquiry into Friday's Deception Bay **floods**, and the proximity of the Moreton Bay Rail Link development. It will be run by engineering firm SMEC, which worked on the Snowy Mountains Scheme.

LOAD-DATE: May 5, 2015

LANGUAGE: ENGLISH

PUBLICATION-TYPE: Newspaper

JOURNAL-CODE: The Australian

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[Return to List](#)

13 of 86 DOCUMENTS

STAR

Gatton, Lockyer and Brisbane Valley

Gatton, Lockyer and Brisbane Valley Star (Queensland)

April 29, 2015

New flood inquiry possible

SECTION: Pg. 3

LENGTH: 270 words

QUEENSLAND Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk has said her Labor government was giving "very serious consideration" about pursuing a new **inquiry** in the 2011 **Lockyer Valley floods** where 12 people died in the **Grantham** area.

Speaking on the Alan Jones radio program on Monday morning, Ms Palaszczuk said she had asked for independent legal advice.

"I believe those families need some closure," Ms Palaszczuk said.

"What they went through was horrific."

Mr Jones blamed the Grantham flood on a quarry near Grantham which he said became a "bathtub".

"When the weight of the water collapsed the embankment 12 people died," Mr Jones said.

The Flood Commission of **Inquiry** did mention Wagner's quarry west of Grantham but said it was "unlikely to have had a significant influence on the downstream flow of water into Grantham".

It blamed the extremely heavy rainfall, the lack of alarm-activated gauges in local creeks and a lack of detail in council evacuation plans.

The Australian newspaper published an independent report in March that contradicted the Flood **Inquiry** findings but the LNP Government ruled out another **inquiry** into the matter, prior to the election.

Lockyer Valley Mayor Steve Jones, who has also been calling for an **Inquiry**, welcomed the Premier's statements on Monday morning.

"I welcome the comments from the Premier that she is giving this strong consideration and look forward to working with her government to put all the facts on the table so the people of that district can get some sense of closure around the events of January 10, 2011," Mayor Jones said.

New flood inquiry possible Gatton, Lockyer and Brisbane Valley Star (Queensland) April 29, 2015

Wagners has said it would co-operate with any new flood **inquiry**.

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[Return to List](#)

22 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian

March 10, 2015 Tuesday
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FLOOD INQUIRY IGNORED WAVE'S WITNESSES

BYLINE: Nick Cater

SECTION: COMMENTARY; Pg. 14

LENGTH: 946 words

The Grantham disaster needs revisiting, and let's leave the computer models out

A JUDICIAL inquiry into the blunders of an earlier judicial inquiry may sound like prudential overkill, even in these navel-gazing times. Nevertheless, a review of the proceedings of Catherine Holmes's Queensland **Floods** Commission would be an instructive exercise and might possibly reduce the chances of such a shambolic exercise happening again.

Even before the commission's report was published, it was -apparent something was badly amiss. After declaring its hearings over, the commission was obliged to resume sessions to consider crucial evidence on the management of Wivenhoe Dam, unearthed not by the commission's well-resourced team of "experts" but by The Australian's Hedley Thomas.

Now The Australian has shamed Holmes's inquiry again in a manner that should eradicate any residual credibility it has.

The commission, we now know, made a series of elemental yet critical mistakes. It made these mistakes because it devalued the evidence of witnesses who watched the **floods** unfold in real time. Rather than carefully evaluating their testimony and the abundant physical evidence, it outsourced its work to a panel of experts who staked the inquiry's reputation on theoretical models rather than actual events.

More people died in Grantham in an hour than in any other single **flood** event in the whole of that dreadful Queensland summer. They died within a 500m radius of one another.

The 12 victims included a one-year-old who was torn from her exhausted mother's arms. Three people died when a brick veneer house collapsed under the force of the water. A volunteer rural fireman thought his family would be safe in the cab of his fire truck. Yet the vehicle was tossed on the wave of water as if it were a weekend runabout. His wife, 12-year-old son and five-year-old daughter died.

So how many pages of the 653-page **floods** commission report were devoted to this extraordinary event? Grantham is mentioned in just 28 of them and the two in the index hardly count. Neither do the references on three introductory pages or the nine where the word Grantham appears only in the footnotes.

The five pages that consider Grantham's post-**flood** recovery, the three on the local emergency response and the one on the break in the energy supply are, with respect, side issues.

Apart from six passing refer-ences, the circumstances of the actual **flood** in Grantham are confined to just

11/2 pages.

Local voices were heard at two community gatherings yet the commission admits "no formal evidence was taken". Holmes's report says the meetings were "a useful way for the commission to hear directly from members of the Lockyer Valley community what they regarded as the questions needing to be considered by the commission".

The conceit of that sentence is breathtaking. What would the little people of Grantham know about anything? It is, after all, a pocket of exceptional educational deprivation, a town so low on the socioeconomic scale that it -almost falls off the bottom.

"We were all treated like stupid problems basically, you know, like hillbilly hicks," said Marty Warburton, who runs Grantham's service station.

Yet Warburton, and many others, knew the **Grantham flood** started with the collapse of a dam wall, on the edge of Wagner's **quarry**, several kilometres upstream.

Flood water covering an area of perhaps 100ha, 2.5m deep in parts, built up behind the quarry wall. When the quarry wall gave way, millions of tonnes of water were released, forming a wave more than 2m high.

Yet the commission concluded the quarry's earthworks had actually eased the **flood**. It based this inherently improbable finding on a single survey by hydrologist Phillip Jordan, whose assessment relied almost entirely on computer modelling.

It has taken more than four years, and a considerable investment by The Australian, to produce a more credible explanation. An independent study by DHI found Jordan's study was deeply flawed. Three glaring errors are highlighted.

First, Jordan took his readings from the peak of the **flood**, yet the damage to lives and property -occurred at the onset of the **flood** as the wall of water smashed, without warning, into buildings and cars.

Second, having run the data through the computer, Jordan should have checked it against the abundant physical evidence on the ground and witness accounts. This he conspicuously failed to do. If he had he would have concluded that his computer was talking out its rear air vent.

Third, Jordan was incapable of telling the time. He could not say with any certainty when the **flood** hit Grantham and takes a stab at a quarter past three. In fact, the evidence puts the timing of the **flood** 45 critical minutes later. Telstra records show that when Jon Sippel telephoned Tom Friend to tell him he had just witnessed the dam bursting, barely 100m away, it was seven minutes to four. Danny McGuire's call to Fire Service HQ from his home on the Gatton-Helidon Road was made at 4.01 and 57 seconds.

In this case pedantry is important because the longer the water was held back behind the levee at Wagner's quarry, the greater the accumulated volume and the greater the force when released.

If Annastacia Palaszczuk's fledgling government wants to avoid being tarnished by the self-interested, election-driven -actions of Anna Bligh's government during and after the **flood**, she must commission a fresh inquiry into the Grantham disaster. It is surely time for a Queensland premier to take a stand on principles, to take a stand for the people of Lockyer Valley, and take a stand against the politics of pusillanimity that have so far prevented the nation facing the truth.

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[Return to List](#)

23 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian

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Speaker backs new **flood** inquiry push

BYLINE: ANDREW FRASER, AMANDA GEARING

SECTION: THENATION; Pg. 9

LENGTH: 1047 words

Speaker backs new **flood** inquiry push

PRESSURE for a fresh inquiry into aspects of the devastating 2011 Grantham **floods** intensified yesterday with more residents and the local council joining the chorus.

The inquiry push was boosted when Queensland's next speaker and the man who holds the balance of power in the Queensland parliament, Peter Wellington, strongly backed the calls.

Mr Wellington has passed on to Premier Anastacia Palaszczuk a letter from the Lockyer Valley Regional Council which asks for another inquiry as "many residents are still seeking answers on what may have contributed to the **flood**, including man-made features of the landscape".

On the weekend, Ms Palaszczuk's office said it was seeking advice on the implications of a new study, commissioned by The Australian, which shed new light on the role of a collapsed quarry embankment in creating the -"inland tsunami" that cost 12 lives in the district.

Grantham resident Marty Warburton, a former councillor elected by townspeople as chairman of Grantham's community recovery fund in the immediate aftermath of the **flood**, maintains that Mother Nature caused the **flood** but man-made structures made it worse.

"The town would have **flooded** that day anyway because we had so much rain, but this was a different **flood** in that it didn't go along the creek, it came at us over land," he said yesterday. "The only thing causing that diversion was the quarry a mile out of town.

"We had an inquiry, but they never got close to finding out what actually happened. Those of us who saw it with our own eyes are being asked to believe that we didn't see it." Lockyer Mayor Steve Jones yesterday said a new government would have the chance to look at the matter again and that Mr Wellington had long taken an interest in how Grantham had **flooded** so quickly in January 2011. Mr Jones wrote in May last year to the previous premier, Campbell Newman, making a similar request, but Mr Newman replied: "I do not believe that another costly investigation will present any new findings that will contribute to the psychosocial healing of affected residents." Mr Jones said: "It's a very emotional subject for people around here. Pretty well everyone in town knows someone who was killed, and we as a council just don't have the answers to the overhang of those events. A lot of people here were very unhappy with the way the investigation was carried out, and it would be nice to get some closure." Mr Wellington yesterday said "many people have told me that the original inquiry was unacceptable". "Now that we've got new evidence, it might be time to have

Speaker backs new flood inquiry push The Australian March 10, 2015 Tuesday

another look at it, specifically the impact of man-made features," he said.

Harris Street resident Ray van Dijk remains unconvinced by **flood** modelling that claimed the **Grantham quarry** mitigated the **flood**. "Scientific reports are different from someone being there and seeing what happened. It was a 2m wall of water that came in a big surge," he said yesterday.

Mr van Dijk used his canoe on the day of the **flood** to rescue 23 of his neighbours and 12 dogs and helped them to safety on his roof. He still has nightmares about the rescues and is adamant that a new inquiry is needed.

"It most definitely has to be further investigated," he said. "I've seen **floods** come up and down. Sandy Creek would back up and it would slowly rise. This came from the opposite direction. It came from the west in one big rush.

"It came so suddenly and started smashing houses off their stumps all around me. It was definitely a dam bust. It couldn't have been anything else." The then Queensland government commissioned judge Catherine Holmes to look into all aspects of the January 2011 **flood**.

The Weekend Australian on Saturday published a new study by hydraulic engineers DHI that found that the technical experts in the original inquiry had underestimated the extent of the collapse of an embankment wall at a quarry just outside the town. The DHI inquiry found that 260m of the embankment wall had collapsed but the original inquiry claimed only 55m of the wall had collapsed.

In a letter to The Australian, Ms Holmes said the inquiry had travelled to Grantham specifically so that local people could directly tell of the events. "Nobody from Grantham who wanted to give the commission information was refused that opportunity; to the contrary, they were strongly encouraged to speak or write to us," the letter said. "I personally sat down with a number of residents to hear their accounts. Oral evidence was taken in the commission's public hearings from six Grantham residents whose statements were representative of community members' accounts of how the **flood** developed. Having collected that evidence, and (as my reports make clear) because of the concerns some **Grantham** residents had expressed about the possible role of the **quarry**, I obtained expert hydrological advice to clarify what had occurred." Retirees Peter and Marie van Straten were in their highset Queenslander in Anzac Avenue when it was ripped from its 3m stumps and careered in the torrent for 1.7km before being stopped in a pumpkin paddock by a bore pipe and a car that had been wrapped around the pipe by the force of the water.

Mr Van Straten is now in palliative care due to advanced melanoma and may not live to see the findings of a new study but he wants answers. "I would like to know before I die," he said. His wife also wants answers about why their house was swept away.

Grantham businesswoman Lisa Spierling said she wished the **Grantham flood** had been simply a natural disaster but the compelling evidence from locals was that **floodwaters** banked up west of the **Grantham quarry**, overflowed and slammed into the town. "If people saw what I saw and saw the terror in my children's eyes they would want answers about why this happened," she said. "The town was always going to **flood**, but it would not have been that massive destructive gush." Amateur weather watcher Neil Pennell, who posted accurate forecasts of the Grantham **flood** on a Weatherzone discussion forum hours before the wave hit, believes a new study could yield answers. He said the inquiry needed to listen to the people who saw what happened. Mr Pennell said it was clear that **floodwater** backed up west of the quarry. "It was kilometres wide," he said.

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[Return to List](#)

28 of 86 DOCUMENTS

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Out of the west, a wall of water

BYLINE: NICK CATER, AMANDA GEARING

SECTION: INQUIRER; Pg. 19

LENGTH: 3535 words

A new expert study reinforces what the snubbed survivors of **Grantham's 2011 floods** have long maintained

AS a turgid wall of water laden with debris churned towards the Queensland town of Grantham on the afternoon of January 10, 2011, Lisa Spierling, her children and countless neighbours were living their own terrifying nightmares.

Minutes earlier, Spierling had been in her kitchen baking a carrot cake. Now the florist and army reservist was herding seven children and some elderly neighbours up a steep, slippery railway embankment about 2m high.

Looking out across her flower farm on the other side of Railway Street, Spierling watched her largest shadehouse crumble; 18 years of her toil was destroyed in seconds. But the worst was to come.

"My son screamed 'f..k!' and we looked to the west - the railway line was disappearing," Spierling told The Weekend Australian. "It's like at the beach, it just had this big sort of roll on it. It was brown, with a lot of crap in it, logs and sticks and trees. It's just a lot of debris, a lot of crap." Spierling began running east along the concrete railway sleepers, a four-year-old child on one hip and a baby on the other. The older children carried Bogart the dog and ran ahead. As she looked to her right she saw the torrent engulfed the street like an inland tsunami, cars and shipping containers floating on top. A wooden house broke from its anchors and began to tilt on its side.

"I remember it going up like that to, I don't know, about 45 degrees. And I remember the people in there sort of yelling," she says. She could see them screaming and waving for help but could not hear them over the noise. "It was deafening. You could hear the cars crashing and getting sucked under the bridge. My son said he felt the bridge shaking. He said he saw people in some of them." Spierling's account of a rolling wave more than 2m high sweeping through the streets of Grantham is consistent with the stories of more than a dozen witnesses interviewed by The Weekend Australian. It is consistent with the Queensland Coroner's report that describes water bursting into kitchens, demolishing a brick veneer home and ripping a baby from the arms of a mother who barely survived herself.

Yet none of these accounts were included in the Queensland Floods Commission's report into the 2011 floods. Commissioner Catherine Holmes, a serving Supreme Court judge, decided that to meet her deadline she would not hear evidence from those who experienced the floods. She relied instead on experts from respected firm SKM. It was left to this team, led by hydrologist Phillip Jordan, to examine the pattern of flooding in Grantham and to help explain why 12 people died.

Grantham residents believe the main force of the water was not along the banks of Lockyer Creek as Jordan claimed, because the people all survived and the houses there were least affected. It was the people and houses more than a kilometre from the creek, along the Gatton-Helidon Road, that bore the brunt of the deadly force.

Jordan concluded the residents were wrong in claiming the collapse of the quarry's levee or embankment, 3m to 5m high and 380m long, had released the wall of water that engulfed the quiet Lockyer Valley town. He determined that, far from triggering a deadly wave, as residents claimed, the quarry and its embankment had mitigated the flood damage, lessening its impact on the town.

At least that is what Jordan's computer modelling told him and what the floods **inquiry** adopted. Holmes concluded in the **inquiry's** final report, "on the basis of Dr Jordan's evidence, that none of the earthworks associated with the quarry caused or contributed to the flooding of Grantham on 10 January 2011".

Now, however, serious questions are raised about these findings. A second independent study, commissioned by The Weekend Australian from international hydraulic engineering firm DHI, strongly suggests the original findings are seriously flawed. The new findings strongly suggest the embankment's breach was five times greater than modelled by SKM - and that, as a result, the surge of floodwaters through the much wider breach in the wall was larger, more sudden and more hazardous. The upshot: it would have left the people of Grantham with less time to escape to higher, safer ground.

More people died in 40 minutes in Grantham than anywhere else in Queensland that dreadful, rain-soaked summer. Yet Holmes's 653-page report devoted less than 11/2 pages to their plight. Jordan's verbal evidence to the commission lasted a matter of minutes.

Spierling cried when she read the findings. "I've said it all along, I'll say it until the day I die. I will tell you that was a huge wall of water that hit us. And it was coming from the west." Marty Warburton saw shipping containers, cars, a house and two bodies floating past his service station. He too cried when the original report was released and he still cries, shaken, pale and quivering, as he recalls the horrors of that dreadful afternoon.

"It's hard not to think that they've got it so wrong because they want to," he told The Weekend Australian. "We were all treated like stupid problems, basically; you know, like hillbilly hicks. They said: 'We've got to have experts to tell us that.' If the experts got it wrong, well â[#x20ac]!" The Weekend Australian has been investigating the cause of the Grantham flood for more than 18 months. Most of the interviews were conducted more than a year ago, yet it is only today, with the support of an expert study, that the newspaper has the confidence to publish the information, believing the case against the quarry wall is now reinforced with evidence.

Further corroboration is provided by 60 minutes of video material, hundreds of photographs and the harrowing accounts given to the Queensland Coroner, which have been forensically examined and compared.

The quarry, now abandoned, lies about 3km west of Grantham in a horseshoe bend on the Lockyer Creek, on a once-flat patch of land where Tom Friend harvested lucerne more than 30 years and several floods ago. "In 1996 the water just went straight across, across the flat," Friend said. "I was standing here in 1974, it was big but it came just down below the gully here, across the flat." In 2011 it was different. Graham and Helen Besley were living in one of three properties adjacent to the quarry. At around 3.45pm they were standing on the eastern banks of Lockyer Creek watching the water rising on farmland behind the embankment.

"I just looked at it mesmerised. I stood there for three or four minutes," Graham Besley said. "Then I saw a wave of water coming overland. That's when I turned and ran."

Helen Besley said: "We drove around the end of the house. We were facing west. We didn't see it coming. All of a sudden it was just there and over us. If it had broadsided us it would have rolled us. But we were facing west. It hit the front of the car and it went over the top of the car." The two floated on their car before falling off and clinging to the frames of their greenhouses for an hour or more. Their house fared less well.

The western walls, facing the quarry, were destroyed. A tree trunk speared the house, lodging in the corner of the lounge room.

When Friend and his wife Sandra were allowed to return to their house across the road from the Bes-ley property five days later, the evidence of the force and direction of the torrent was clear to see. A steel gate bar had been snapped off, a cold room had shifted 10m and the concrete base of a water tank had worn away.

The Friends' Friesian cow had floated 1.5km and was found alive on the railway line. The wave rolled eastwards across farmland unimpeded for another 200m, inundating properties, bending the corrugated metal walls of a farm shed and scattering plastic horticultural tunnels like streamers. It crossed the Gatton-Helidon Road before it met its match: a solid railway embankment, more than 2m high, that funnelled the torrent towards Grantham.

Teenager Katherine Godley was in her front yard recording the ripples of rising water on her video camera when the flow suddenly changed direction. "What did they do, open a dam or something?" she asked at the time as the flow became faster. "It's as fast as friggin' hell." As she tilted her camera towards the paddock across the road, she caught sight of a second wave, murky and menacing. "Shit! That's coming in really fast now. I'm going to go upstairs." About 250m away, Stacy and Matthew Keep were sheltering in their new brick-veneer house with their three children - Madison, 5, Jacob, 4, and Jessica, 1 - and their mothers, Pauline Magner and Dawn Radke. "We decided to put the kids up on the kitchen bench thinking they were safe," Stacy Keep told the coroner. "The windows could not take the pressure of the water and they started smashing instantly, and all the water came gushing in and the kids went flying off the bench." Keep remains too shaken to speak publicly of her ordeal, but the coroner's account bears testimony to the unequal struggle of a mother and her baby with the powerful hydraulic force released when the quarry embankment collapsed.

Keep, who was pregnant, lost sight of two of her children but clung on to Jessica, grabbing on to the buckled garage door and then to a downpipe before she became too tired to do so.

She and her child were washed across the road in water too deep to stand up. Helpless in the current, they were swept towards the now submerged railway line, where Keep's legs became trapped in debris. "We went under water and I couldn't get them out," she said. "The water was just so strong and Jessie got ripped out of my arms." Keep's husband had been washed for 150m to a house in nearby Sorrensen Street, where he helped the neighbours on to the roof of their house, using their mobile phone to dial 000 at 4.30pm. After being rescued by helicopter and reunited with his wife, Matthew Keep walked back down the hill and jumped into the water, swimming back with Jonathan Klassen to his house where they rescued their two frightened children. There was no sign of Matthew Keep's mother, Magner, or Radke.

There had been every reason to fear the water rushing along Lockyer Creek towards Brisbane. Shortly after 1pm, a ferocious storm hit Toowoomba delivering a torrent that cascaded down both sides of the Great Dividing Range. By 2.45pm eight people had died. A dozen more, nine adults and three children, would die in Grantham within two hours, but no alarm had been sounded and no one was poised to come to the rescue.

Three doors up the road from the Godleys' raised wooden Queenslander, Frances Arndt took a phone call from her daughter Kym Evans, who was standing on the other side of the valley and watching a wave of water heading towards her parents' house.

"Get the f..k out of the house, Mum!" Kym screamed.

Frances Arndt's husband Kenley, 72, was talking to neighbour Danny McGuire, a volunteer firefighter.

"I could see across the paddock toward Lockyer Creek and saw a large sheet of water heading towards us, like watching a wave at the beach as it comes up the sand," Frances Arndt told The Weekend Australian.

As the Arndts set off for safer ground in their Toyota Hilux, McGuire climbed into his truck and radioed Queensland Fire and Rescue's South-East Region HQ at Beenleigh. The call connected at 4.01pm and 47

seconds.

McGuire: "Comms, this is Grantham 5-1." Operator: "Go ahead Grantham 5-1." McGuire: "Grantham 5-1 needs assistance by QPS and SES in a big hurry. Grantham westbound has gone under. The Lockyer Creek has busted its banks. We've got about 35 to 40 people to get out of here in a hurry." There had been no flood warning for the Lockyer Valley from the Bureau of Meteorology that day. It would be another 58 minutes before one was issued, by which time much of Grantham was under more than 2m of water.

When the roaring creek struck the tight bend at Wagners' quarry, the artificial dam at the kink of the creek forced the water to swirl back on itself, spreading out and creating a temporary reservoir covering 100ha or more of farmland. Photographs from the late 1970s show the land as it once was, pancake flat and cropped. Gatton Shire Council approved quarrying on the site in July 1981 and extraction began on the northern end. In 1994 the quarry was purchased by Wagner Investments. Accounts differ about the development of the embankment, who was behind it and whether it became larger in the 2000s during the long drought.

Jon Sippel's house is one of three that adjoin the quarry separated by the creek on its northern edge. He was still too shaken to discuss what he saw that traumatic day, but neighbour Tom Friend took up the story, pointing to locations on a satellite photo. "Jonno was standing here at his place and he could see the water starting to come over that bank," said Friend, pointing to the levee.

"He just got out in time before it went whoosh-ka. He was running. He said it was just a horrific noise. Whoosh-ka, bang, crash.

"Once it has let go it has gone straight ahead. It didn't take any corners. That's why people said they had a wall of water. It had to come, bang, straight through." Tom and Sandra Friend were holidaying at Hervey Bay. He rang Sippel from his mobile at 3.53pm, minutes after the levee burst.

From early that morning when a deep low-pressure system travelling north encountered a monsoonal trough travelling south off the Queensland coast, it had become clear to amateur weather watchers that southeast Queensland should brace for an exceptional storm.

At 1.16pm, hours before the Grantham flooding, Anthony Cornelius posted this message on a Weatherzone forum from Heritage Park in Brisbane: "Concerning for the Gatton-Grantham area right now with that very large storm/rain area moving towards it â[#x20ac]; I hope they're prepared for it." They were not. The Arndts had travelled barely 100m west on the Gatton-Helidon Road when the water from the rising creek began creeping over the door seals.

Through the rear window Frances Arndt saw McGuire's yellow Isuzu fire truck pull out of his drive and try to turn towards them, but the current was too strong and the truck was washed backwards. Then, as the Arndts rounded a bend, the water that had burst from the quarry hit them head-on, setting the two-tonne ute afloat.

"It was like a bloody torrent, it was unbelievable," Kenley Arndt said. "The water was up to our necks and the car was beginning to sink." They wrestled with the electric windows and managed to lower them sufficiently to squeeze through. They grabbed a tree and clung on to it.

McGuire and his family had problems of their own as their truck was tossed in the current. Unable to get through on his radio, McGuire rang 000 and told the operator he and his family would have to abandon their vehicle.

"I was still on the phones and the next thing there was a big wall of water that hit us. It was bigger than the truck," McGuire told coroner Michael Barnes. He threw his son Zach towards a tree through the driver's window and told him to start climbing. His wife Llync was screaming that her window would not open. Water pouring into the truck swirled around, thrusting McGuire out of the window. He grabbed hold of tree and lost sight of the truck. He could hear his son crying and screaming.

"He just kept calling out, 'Where's Mum?' and I kept going, 'I don't know, mate.'" Frank King and his son John were on top of John's car in Railway Street when rapidly rising water overwhelmed them.

Out of the west, a wall of water The Australian March 7, 2015 Saturday

"I was hanging on to that tree there, around about the fork," Frank King said. "I was out horizontal. It took my trousers and my shoes and everything off and ripped my shirt. I pulled this hat over my face and it saved me an awful lot of grief. It wasn't a steady stream, it came in surges. Someone up at Helidon told me they counted 22 surges; well, I reckon I felt the whole lot of them." At 4.09pm at his service station a half kilometre east along the road, Warburton photographed a 20-foot shipping container sailing briskly past the bowser. The water was no more than a half-metre deep at that stage. One video shows a child paddling in it.

"It went from just below knee-deep to waist-deep within 30 seconds or a minute," Warburton said. "And that's when you could feel in the water the vibrations and the movement of it. That's when I knew we had to get out." Warburton was standing inside his shop, waist-deep in water, when the torrent hit. "The windows exploded when that big surge came. It came through the door like a funnel, just like you see in cartoons. My drink fridges were picked up and just smashed into the back wall. You don't believe in monsters until you see one." Within moments the water was almost at the ceiling. "I took a breath and duck dived out the door. I grabbed a hold of the awning and jagged myself up." A few hundred metres away, the Grantham Hotel was surrounded with water. Video footage shot by publican Lance Richardson from the balcony shows the raging torrent.

Next door, water was pouring into Brenda Ross's double-brick house at 8 Anzac Avenue where the wheelchair-bound 56-year-old widow was sheltering with her 25-year-old son Joshua and family friend Christopher Face, 63.

Video taken by Richardson at 4.28pm shows the house surrounded by floodwater. "I heard a loud crack and I looked around and the house was gone," Richardson told the coroner. "The house just went splat really. We did look but we could not see anyone and I believed at the time they really had no chance." His wife Morva told investigators she recalled seeing Face and Joshua Ross through the window as the water rose. "The whole house seemed to pop up out of the water and then it exploded," she said. "All the bricks just blew out a couple of metres in all directions. There was no actual explosion; it was just like the house blew out." All three died but their dog, Penny, escaped, swimming for three days until it was rescued.

Across the road, Peter and Marie Van Straten heard a loud crack as trees carried by the torrent smashed into their high-set Queenslander home.

"The first thing we know the front steps are gone and the back veranda collapsed at the same time," Peter Van Straten said. Shortly after 4.45pm the house broke free from its stumps, where it had rested 2m off the ground, and began floating to the east.

"As it went through the trees the kitchen broke off," Peter Van Straten said. "It was the hardest thing I've ever heard in my life, the sound of timber breaking and ripping and tearing. We're both standing round the kitchen table, we had the dog on the table with us, standing in water. Everything was rocking and rolling a bit." The house sailed on east across the paddocks, eventually hitting a car wedged against a bore pipe and coming to rest. The couple huddled together, shoulder-deep in water, until they were rescued by helicopter.

The Van Stratens are among those who take issue with the floods commission's findings. They know what they saw. The tsunami that knocked their house off its stumps did not come from the south where the Lockyer Creek had burst its banks. It arrived from along the Gatton-Helidon Road from the direction of the quarry. The path the house took, like every other piece of debris tossed about by the flood, is evidence that the main current of water came from the west.

"I would like to see a proper **inquiry** on what happened here," Peter Van Straten said. "I'm not after anything for myself, I'm not asking for money or anything like that. I just want to find out what the truth is. If you know the truth something can be done about it so it doesn't happen again." Warburton added: "It's not about persecution or personal gripe. Let's just get the truth about what happened here.

"The violence and destruction and the devastation that was caused from that water coming from the way that it did I believe has man-made influences associated with it. No doubt whatsoever that development in the design-nated watercourse pushed the water out on the flat and that with the contributing factor of the railway

Out of the west, a wall of water The Australian March 7, 2015 Saturday

line keeping it all in a small area, our town got destroyed because of that." Tom and Sandra Friend have since rebuilt their house across the creek from the quarry. They want the wall demolished and the quarry restored to its natural condition.

They lost many possessions in the flood, but it is not the lost treasures that reduce them to tears. It is the frustration of not being believed despite the evidence that was there for all to see but that somehow failed to register in SKM's computer modelling.

"I'm pretty sure a bloke looking at a picture can't tell what a bloke standing there looking at it can tell," Tom Friend said. "There's witnesses seen the wall of water coming, and they're trying to say there was no wall of water. How did a house get washed off its stumps if there's no wall of water?"

Friend apologises to his wife for swearing before continuing: "That's what happened and how it happened, and then every bastard tried to deny it. That is the part that really pisses you off."

â[#x20ac] for video footage of the Grantham flood and read our specially commissioned report attheaustralian.com.au

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[Return to List](#)

29 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian

March 7, 2015 Saturday
Australian Edition

Vindication for those in eye of the storm

BYLINE: Nick Cater

SECTION: THENATION; Pg. 8

LENGTH: 589 words

TOM Friend stands on ground zero of the **Lockyer Valley flood**, the place where a **quarry** wall crumbled, sending millions of tonnes- of debris-laden water toward-s the town of **Grantham**.

His phone records suggest the fatal breach occurred shortly -before 3.53pm on January 10, 2011, more than half an hour later than the Queensland **flood** inquiry suggested.

The new DHI hydraulic engineering study, commissioned by The Weekend Australian, says the delay would have caused a significant increase in the water level -upstream, contributing to a larger **flood** surge than the commission concluded.

"Blind Freddy can see this thing started at the quarry," Friend says. "Once it has let go it has gone straight ahead. It didn't take any corners. It had to come, bang, straight through." Blind Freddy may have seen it, but the commission did not when in 2012 it dismissed Friend's -account in a cursory 11/2 pages of its 634-page report.

Friend and dozens of other Lockyer Valley residents volunteered to tell their stories to the commission but their offers were refused. Commissioner Catherine Holmes decided to hand the matter to experts who, using computer modelling, concluded that the burst wall in Wagner's quarry -actually lessened the impact of the **flood**.

"I'm pretty sure a bloke looking at a picture can't tell what a bloke standing there looking at it can tell," Friend says. "How did a house get washed off its stumps if there's no wall of water?"

"That's what happened and how it happened, and then every bastard tried to deny it. That is the part that really pisses you off." The new hydraulic engineering study backs Friend's account of the **floods** in every significant -detail. Friend speaks of the massive lake that accumulated across farmland behind the quarry wall as a result of water rushing down from the Toowoomba ranges.

He tells how his neighbour, Jon Sippell, saw water creeping over the top of the artificial mound of quarry spill 3-5m high and 380m long.

He tells of the horrible crash as the wall gave way, sending the water on its destructive path through the middle of his brick-veneer house, funnelled by the railway line, towards the unsuspecting residents of Grantham.

All of that, and more, is at odds with the SKM study prepared for the commission, but is entirely consistent

with DHI's findings.

Friend knows the valley like the back of his hand; he was cropping lucerne in the middle of the horseshoe bend in the creek 40 years ago, before it was turned into a quarry. In earlier **floods**, the pancake-flat paddock became a natural escape valve, allowing the **flood water** to take a short cut across the bend before resuming its course in the Lockyer Creek.

"In 1996 the water just went straight across the flat," he said. "Same as 1974 - I was standing here in 1974 - it was big but it came just down below the gully here but it was across the flat." On January 10, 2011, it was a different story. The wave of water, more than 2m high in parts, set houses afloat, overturned cars, smashed through windows and demolished a brick-veneer building.

Marie and Peter Van Straten believe it was shortly after 4.45pm when their house broke free from its stumps and began floating to the east.

"As it went through the trees it broke off the kitchen," Ms Van Straten says. "It was the hardest thing I've ever heard in my life, the sound of timber breaking and ripping and tearing." The Van Stratens were broken-hearted by the commission's findings. Now they feel a sense of overwhelming relief, and want a second, more thorough, inquiry.

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[Return to List](#)

32 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian

March 7, 2015 Saturday
Australian Edition

Flood theory no longer watertight

BYLINE: HEDLEY THOMAS, ANALYSIS

SECTION: THENATION; Pg. 8

LENGTH: 585 words

Doubt has been cast on the causes of the Grantham disaster

WHEN grave questions were first raised about the possible role of Wagner's Quarry in the flooding of the town of Grantham and the deaths of 12 of its residents in January 2011, opinion was sharply divided.

Some townsfolk were adamant that an earthen embankment near the quarry and adjacent to Lockyer Creek, near Grantham, had contributed to the "inland -tsunami".

Several spoke to The Weekend Australian's Tony Koch and Amanda Gearing, whose investigations culminated in a long article in July 2011, "After the flood", which explained and gave weight to the hypothesis.

They reported: "Landholders opposite the quarry saw flood-water begin to flow through the earth wall and fled their properties.

"They estimate the floodwater built up to more than 4m in height and eventually broke through the quarry's earth wall, forcing almost 2m of water into the houses nearest the creek. The frightening wall of water then sped 150m to the railway line embankment, which is built up some 2m, and this effectively channelled the water along the bitumen road straight into Grantham township." Other journalists, notably Nick Cater, and Sydney radio 2GB broadcaster Alan Jones, who have investigated Grantham's disaster in the years since, also formed strong views that the victims and survivors had been let down by the floods inquiry and experts.

But the hydrologists who were retained to give evidence were emphatic in their view that the quarry's deep pit mitigated the flood downstream in Grantham, and the embankment's collapse made a negligible difference to flow.

While some still point to the quarry and its embankment as culprits, the Wagner family is just as adamant that the deep pit from which they dug out great loads of sand had slowed the flood by taking a huge volume of its water.

Denis Wagner, the head of the quarry before his family sold it to Boral after the flood, has repeatedly rejected accusations that the embankment played a deadly role in the flood. It has long been the contention of the residents that the earthen wall was man-made and unapproved - and that it fundamentally changed the flow of Lockyer Creek in a flood.

The dozen deaths from the flash flooding in Grantham made the town the centre of one of Australia's worst

Flood theory no longer watertight The Australian March 7, 2015 Saturday

disasters from **flooding**. In all, 22 people were killed and three left missing in the **floods** that hit southeast Queensland -between January 10 and 13, 2011.

One bugbear for residents is that the inquest by then coroner Michael Barnes was restricted. He reported that as a result of the establishment of the more powerful commission of inquiry into the **floods**, it was made clear that he "was not to look at matters of prevention, that being a matter for the (**floods** inquiry)".

No expense was spared by the then Anna Bligh-led Labor government to ensure a rigorous examination by the **floods** inquiry.

There were dozens of astute professionals involved in investigations providing expert advice to a serving Supreme Court judge, Cate Holmes, and the probe run by Mr Barnes.

But the findings yesterday from DHI cast serious doubt on the **floods** inquiry's conclusions. The Wagner family is getting on with business. Last year it completed one of the largest privately funded infrastructure projects in Queensland's history, the Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport. The townsfolk who feel most aggrieved say they cannot move on. They want an official inquiry to reopen investigations and correct what they regard as a major error.

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[Return to List](#)

36 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Chronicle

The Chronicle (Toowoomba, Queensland)

October 29, 2014 Wednesday

MP alleges big cover-up on Grantham; CLAIM IN PARLIAMENT: Alex Douglas calls for Royal Commission into "~flood'

SECTION: Pg. 12

LENGTH: 282 words

THE **flooding** of Grantham needed a Royal Commission as there had been a "cover-up" in the subsequent inquiries, independent MP Alex Douglas claimed in parliament yesterday.

The Gaven MP said the State Government was ignoring Grantham residents' stories and an investigation was needed.

"Queenslanders must know that at 4pm on the day of the **flood** the sun was shining," Dr Douglas said.

"Water from heavy rain to the west and north-west of **Helidon** rapidly filled **Lockyer** Creek but was blocked by a dam and bund wall at Wagner's **quarry**.

"The dam and bund wall burst.

"This smashed into **Grantham** two kilometres downstream from the **quarry** dam."

He said another investigation into what happened in Grantham was needed.

"Today I'm demanding a Royal Commission into all matters regarding what happened in Grantham before, during and after this so-called **flood** event," Dr Douglas said.

The MP said in a statement on his website that critical eye witnesses were refused the right to give specific testimony, which would have clarified what caused the **flood** and why it caused so much damage.

"It is not unreasonable to say this appears to be a cover-up," Dr Douglas said.

The MP called for the investigation to result in charges being sent to the Department of Public Prosecutions.

"We need to delve deeply into discovering what went wrong in Grantham," Dr Douglas said.

"We must identify what and whom were at fault.

"It should clarify what steps have to be taken, including taking full evidence from witnesses to verify what has

MP alleges big cover-up on Grantham; CLAIM IN PARLIAMENT: Alex Douglas calls for Royal Commission into 'flood' The Chronicle (Toowoomba, Queensland) October 29, 2014 Wednesday

occurred.

"It should then detail a path for prosecutions for those who were responsible."

Lockyer MP Ian Rickuss was in parliament yesterday and did not return calls. - **APN NEWSDESK**

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[Return to List](#)

37 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian Magazine

October 11, 2014 Saturday
1 Edition

PREPARE FOR TAKE-OFF

BYLINE: JAMIE WALKER

SECTION: MAGAZINE; Pg. 20

LENGTH: 4390 words

THE WAGNER FAMILY HAVE POCKETS DEEP ENOUGH TO BUILD AN AIRPORT. BUT CAN THEY SILENCE THEIR CRITICS?

Curtis Park flashes by in a blur of brick and tile bungalows in the rolling countryside outside Toowoomba.

The Wagners built them all. They own the patchwork of land beneath us, crawling with 35-tonne earthmovers and workmen in hard hats. Their field of dreams, seven minutes' flying time from the CBD, reaches to the distant hills, a vast construction site dotted with quarries, concrete plants and a near-complete terminal for the first international-scale civil airport to be developed in Australia in almost 50 years. We swoop low over the 2.87km runway, following the approach an airliner or cargo jet would take.

At the controls of the company helicopter, Neill Wagner is grinning from ear to ear. "Quite something, isn't it?" he says over the hissing intercom.

A former truck driver, he is 47 and silverhaired, the third of the four brothers who run the show. The wonder is we haven't heard more about them. In the space of a generation they have turned an investment in a rundown local pub into a construction empire that spans the globe, generating more than \$400 million annually. This year's BRW Rich Families List put their collective worth at \$827 million, up \$287 million in 12 months.

They are pillars of the community who say grace before Sunday dinner and won't let their kids forget the value of a dollar. "We don't pay for mobile phones and we don't pay for them to party," says first son and company chairman, John Wagner.

Those who know the family can't imagine them doing anything risky with their money. But here they are, building their own airport, on their own land, with their own workforce and without a cent borrowed from the banks or bowled up by government.

John, 53, calls it a "multi-generational business", which fits with what people are saying about how long it will take to recoup their huge investment. Aviation buff Dick Smith, who once chaired the Civil Aviation Safety Authority, can't see how the airport will turn a profit - though he applauds the brothers' chutzpah. "I am absolutely amazed that someone would be doing this today, because just about everyone in aviation is losing money," says the entrepreneur.

The Wagners are as big as it gets in range-top Toowoomba, 130km west of Brisbane. Able to open just

about any door, employing 700-odd locals, their company pays more in council rates than most other businesses would turn over.

When the family announced in June 2012 the airport would be capable of handling most planes - up to a Boeing 747 jumbo - the response was generally positive. As the work ramped up 24/7 under **floodlights**, hardly a murmur of dissent was reported by the local media. The development application was deemed "code assessable" by the Toowoomba Regional Council, meaning it proceeded without an environmental impact statement or community objections being heard.

Concerns about potential aircraft noise could not be raised under the fast-track process. By the time regulators CASA and Airservices Australia got to look at the likely flight paths, it was all but a done deal. The extravagantly named Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport will open in November with QantasLink as an anchor customer.

There was just one hiccup - a very loud one, as it transpired. Sydney radio's biggest personality, Alan Jones, went into bat for his friends, Heather Brown and David Pascoe, whose property adjoins the airport site. Most politicians tread warily around the voluble, 73-year-old broadcaster. His top-rating breakfast program is relayed to Toowoomba and the Queensland Darling Downs, his childhood home, and he has railed furiously against the expansion of coal mining and the coal-seam gas industry there. To him, this is a project too far.

Neill Wagner has a point. Up close, the airport really is something. More than 22 million tonnes of rock and gravel have been compacted into the runway, cutting diagonally across the vast site. Off it, taxiways and aprons are having finishing touches applied. The gleaming vanilla terminal has a six metre-tall glass facade leading on to 12,900 square metres of undercover space, 66 times the original envisaged size of just 195 square metres. It will boast four departure gates, two X-ray units for baggage and the capacity to handle 1.2 million passengers annually by 2018, though few except the Wagners expect the numbers to get anywhere near that. John won't be pinned down on the cost: "Between 100 and 200," he says casually of the millions at stake.

The rest of the family business isn't glamorous, but it certainly pays. Wagner Investments grinds cement, hauls iron ore and has developed a process to prefabricate bridge spans from composite fibre; the Curtis Park subdivision east of the airport site is part of a meaty property portfolio.

The international division, headquartered in Kuala Lumpur, helped build a nickel mine in New Caledonia and one of Russia's biggest liquefied natural gas plants. The company grew out of a concreting operation started in 1973 by family patriarch Henry Wagner, 79, a stonemason.

Money was tight with eight kids, headed by John, who attended Toowoomba's St Mary's College. The others went to Downlands, a pricey boarding school. For years, their mother, Mary, worked night duty as a nurse to make ends meet.

When John was kicked out of university, he cheerfully went off to drive a bulldozer and started work for his father after turning 21.

In 1985, Henry sold the business, and John and his brother Denis, now 51, stayed on to work for the new owner. Three years later, the father and sons trio bought the struggling Stock Exchange Hotel in Toowoomba on a whim; they had been kicked out after complaining about the service. At the time, the pub was taking \$18,000 a week. On Christmas Eve, 1989, receipts hit \$100,000 for the day. This gave them the confidence to get back into concreting, John explains.

He, Henry, Denis and Neill went in as equal partners in the new enterprise (Henry has since dropped out, transferring his share in the company to the youngest of the brothers, Joe, 45).

The Wagners mixed their first batch of concrete on November 10, 1989 but there was trouble from the start. The price dropped by \$45 a cubic metre while the cost of aggregate base soared 77 per cent, all on the same day:

they were being squeezed by their competitors.

Vindication came in 1995 when the Australian Competition and Consumer Commission slapped record fines of \$20 million on the companies involved in the collusion. By then, they had acquired the airport site, a 1200ha mixed grain and horse farm called Wellcamp Downs.

The land was rezoned to industrial on application by the Wagners, to the dismay of Brown and her husband, a prominent equine vet.

She had a national profile as a horsewoman and former journalist of long standing with The Australian; her father, Reg Brown, owned the plucky gelding Maccougal, winner of the 1959 Melbourne Cup. They had acquired the neighbouring property, now known as Plaintree Farms, in 2001 and invested heavily in developing the thoroughbred operation. The couple say they believed the Wagners had abandoned their development plans after advertising Wellcamp for sale. As with most of this saga, the details are bitterly contested. John Wagner says a council study had identified the site as suitable for heavy industry in 1996, and the Pascoes would or should have known this; further, the plot offered for sale was farmland, beyond the rezoned area containing the airport site. In the event, Pascoe says Henry Wagner had promised him: "Our family will look after you."

The first they heard of the airport was when it was written up in the local paper after a development application was lodged by the Wagners with the Toowoomba Regional Council on June 29, 2012. The timing is critical. Council mergers in Queensland had created a legal loophole that the family admit to exploiting.

The shire of Jondaryan, covering the Wellcamp site, had been folded into the new regional council in 2008, but the pre-amalgamation planning code remained in force until the start of the 2012-13 financial year.

The Wagners beat the deadline by a day. Had they not, the development application would have been "impact assessed" by Toowoomba Regional Council, requiring extensive community consultation on potential aircraft noise and, most likely, an environmental impact statement.

As it was "code assessed", third party submissions could not be considered. When the penny dropped, there was considerable disquiet.

Toowoomba's newspaper, The Chronicle, owned by regional publisher APN News & Media, may have been on board, along with mayor Paul Antonio and the Queensland government, but Brown says she tapped an undercurrent of concern.

"He's big daddy," she says of John Wagner. "He got his way ... because that's the way it has always been."

Wagner makes no apology.

"Everything we did was strictly in accordance with the law. Strictly," he emphasises. "Our lawyers and council's lawyers agreed it was a properly made application and it adhered to the letter of the law." Antonio, a former farmer, says the council obtained two sets of outside legal advice to affirm the application was in order. He acknowledges that the family took full advantage of the process, as was their right. "The Wagners certainly timed their application ... If I were involved in something like this, that is precisely what I would do," he says.

Still, it's hard to see how a project the size of Brisbane West Wellcamp Airport could have gone through without heavier scrutiny. Witness the travails of Sydney's second airport project at Badgerys Creek. It will have been on the books for three decades if construction starts in 2016 as planned, stalled by not-in-my-backyard protests.

Brisbane Airport's urgently needed new parallel runway will take until 2020 to complete.

The Wagners' development was approved by Toowoomba Regional Council on December 16, 2012. Construction was in full swing within four months. Asked whether the family would have proceeded if more

regulatory hurdles were put in their way, John says: "We would have thought twice about it, to be honest with you."

He insists the airport will be good for Toowoomba and, yes, for his family, too. He's been the driving force from the start. John has loved aviation since he was a boy. His Uncle Pat, a Catholic priest, took him gliding and he was hooked. As a pilot, he holds a command instrument rating, allowing him to fly jets, propeller-driven aircraft and helicopters.

By 2012, his personal and business interests were fusing. When he did the rounds of boardrooms promoting the adjoining business park, investors pushed back. Why would they set up there? Brisbane was a two-hour drive away. Was there a train, an airline service? "No," he said sheepishly. "You get the Greyhound bus."

An incident at the town's existing aerodrome, owned by the council, was telling. The largest plane it can handle is the Bombardier Dash 8 100, carrying about 30 passengers. Wagner had arranged to try out an \$18 million Hawker 4000 business jet so he could fly himself to the regional office in KL. When the American pilots fired up the engines, the jet exhaust blew out the windows of shops across the road. It rammed home to him the need for a new airport.

They had the land at the business park site, know-how, the equipment and expertise, and there already was a quarry at Wellcamp, one of the reasons they had bought the site in 1994 for \$3 million. Most of all, the company had cash on hand. "You can't borrow for an airport without a customer ... the banks would say you're crazy," he says. That's partly why there hasn't been a major public airport built since Tullamarine opened in Melbourne in 1970.

But this felt right. "Right for the region, right for us and certainly the right thing for Toowoomba," he says. "The fact is, we can build the airport faster and cheaper than anyone else could."

The milestones have rolled by thick and fast.

On July 23, John Wagner landed his Beechcraft King Air twin turboprop on the newly surfaced runway, the first plane to touch down.

On September 2, Premier Campbell Newman was on hand for the announcement that QantasLink, the carrier's regional arm, would operate 11 return flights a week to Sydney from Wellcamp, gainsaying Jones, who predicted it would never attract an airline. Work is progressing at a furious pace; the QantasLink services are set to start on November 17.

A number of regulatory issues remain. While the Wagners were able to sidestep an EIS and noise studies to build the airport, it's a different matter to operate it, which they intend to do.

CASA must certify the facility and has confirmed there will be no curfew: flights can come and go round the clock. The agency says the approvals are expected by the end of this month "subject to the aerodrome meeting all of CASA's requirements".

The federal Environment Department is assessing noise maps forwarded by the Wagners' consultants, and John says he is not aware of any issues. Airservices Australia - the provider of air traffic control - has plugged the new airport into a pre-existing review of airspace in the Brisbane basin, taking in the busy military airbase at nearby Oakey on the Darling Downs, the army's principal training centre for helicopter pilots. The military top brass were deeply unimpressed to lose what turned out to be 30 per cent of the designated airspace.

Air Commodore Anker Brodersen, then responsible for the strategic management of defence installations, had warned Toowoomba Regional Council in 2012 that the airport had "safety implications" for Oakey and should be further away from the airbase.

Alan Jones said the likely disruption to military operations was compounded by how the Wagners were to be gifted restricted airspace, a valuable public asset. He contacted Tony Abbott, then Opposition leader, who

seemed receptive.

Abbott told Jones on July 18 last year that Oakey was "sacrosanct", according to the broadcaster's files. Six days later, he wrote that he was "mystified as to how a new airport in a closely settled part of the country could be approved with no consultation and apparently a big and uncompensated loss for neighbouring landholders. It would certainly seem to need reconsideration."

Approached by this magazine, the Prime Minister's office said there were "still several regulatory approvals that need to be completed before passenger services commence". Defence said in a statement it was now satisfied with the airspace arrangements, but noted, intriguingly, this "may change again in the future to accord with ... changes in civil and military flying in the region". There would be no detrimental effect on operations at Oakey, it insisted.

The Wagners say the airport will be mainly a passenger operation, a hub for the 344,000 people living in its catchment area on and to the west of the Great Divide. They're also hoping to syphon business off Brisbane's congested main airport. The company has joined a consortium bidding for the \$1.7 billion second Toowoomba Range crossing that will run past the Wellcamp site, servicing both the airport and the industrial park, still a work in progress. John Wagner argues the new road will cut the travel time from Brisbane's growing western suburbs to 50 minutes, and parking will be cheaper. (Brisbane Airport points into Moreton Bay, on the opposite side of the city, but is serviced by a state-of-the-art car tunnel and elevated train.) The Wagners' business model forecasts 401,921 passengers in the first year of operation, the majority of them local, rising to 1.364 million in year five. By then, projected outputs would have grown from \$161.6 million for 2015 to \$595.8 million to deliver a return on the family's investment.

More than 3200 jobs would be created in the first 12 months, a quarter of them in Toowoomba. Premier Newman says: "This will make a huge difference to the city. It will mean that people will be able to travel here for tourism, it will mean that the gas and energy sector will be able to be well-served ... also we see great opportunities for air freight."

Yet Dick Smith is not the only aviation figure to doubt the new airport's earning capacity.

Former Qantas chief economist Tony Webber can't see how the numbers stack up on the passenger side. "The outbound traffic is too small, there is not much inbound to a place like Toowoomba and you might get a bit of fly-in, fly-out to the mines in central Queensland, but it won't be enough in my view," he says.

Wagner is adamant the project will fly. For a start, he wants to change how air freight is done.

Wellcamp will have none of the capacity constraints that limit operations in Melbourne, Brisbane and Sydney airports, the latter with a curfew. He points to the air trade in live goats to the Middle East. "They take the goats from Charleville, west of here, and truck them right past our door to put them on a jumbo out of Sydney every Sunday. How crazy is that?" Fresh milk and dairy exports into China are another lucrative market, Wagner believes. "We can put produce on a plane here and have it to the market just about anywhere in Asia next morning."

The Pascoes, the Wagners and Alan Jones have shared history on the Darling Downs, which has some of Australia's best agricultural country overlaying rich coal and coal-seam gas reserves.

Like the Wagners, Pascoe's ties to the area reach back five generations. Brown grew up on a property outside dusty Cloncurry in northwest Queensland, and as a journalist she specialised in writing about the bush. She is well connected politically and in the media; Jones is a friend of more than 30 years' standing.

He was raised on a farm near Acland, 35km northwest of Toowoomba, and still calls it home. Today, it's a ghost town, set to be engulfed by a vast open-cut coal pit. Mining and coal-seam gas development have "vandalised and desecrated" the countryside, he says.

As Jones tells it, the story is of the battlers being sold out. He professes not to know the Wagners (though he and Denis once met at the Toowoomba home of Jones's sister, Colleen), and has no interest in the family's

humble beginnings or success.

"I know their behaviour," he says. "I am simply saying you don't run roughshod over people to make a quid, and they have run roughshod over that community."

Brown says she and her husband are not opposed to "the principle" of an airport. "It's about how it was done, how we have been treated," she says. Their home in Toowoomba they don't live on Plaintree Farms - was burgled on September 17 last year, while they were at work. Brown says she was targeted over her activism; her laptop and iPad were taken for what was on them, she says, and she believes the intruders went through her files in the office she shares with her husband, leaving his belongings untouched. She went on Jones's program the following Monday to voice her suspicion it was no ordinary break-in. The 2GB shock jock introduced her as the "victim of bullies wanting her to shut up". However, she made no specific allegation about who might be behind the robbery:

she had "no proof ... but what I would suggest is that this is a mixture of politicians, of mining companies and development interests in the community".

The couple's relationship with John Wagner turned to poison. Heated exchanges between the developer and Pascoe ensued over noise from the construction site; their front paddocks are only a few hundred metres from the end of the runway and he was worried about their horses. Wagner approached Brown at a dinner at Toowoomba Turf Club on November 12, 2013, and true to form their accounts of the conversation differ. She says he assured her he had nothing to do with the break-in; he counters he merely expressed disappointment that Jones had tried to "implicate" the family. Two weeks later, there was further contact. A big crowd had turned out for an open day at the airport site, featuring displays by low-flying "warbird" stunt planes. When Brown got hold of Wagner that night on the phone, she told him the din was unacceptable: they had mares in foal that were traumatised. According to her, he replied: "Obviously, our businesses are incompatible and you need to relocate."

John Wagner, Brown and Pascoe finally met at Plaintree Farms on March 24 this year, ostensibly to thrash out a deal. But another problem had erupted. Brown had been nosing around the connection between the Wagner **quarry** near the **Lockyer** Valley town of **Grantham** and the January 10, 2011 flash **flood** that killed 12 people there. An earthen **embankment** between the **quarry** pit and a raging **Lockyer** Creek gave way, and some locals were convinced this had funnelled the lethal torrent into the town. Alan Jones agreed: "The wall collapsed, the tsunami took over. What else can you say?"

That happened. The people are dead and the families of Grantham have no answers."

A commission of inquiry into the **floods** disaster found the **quarry** pit had, in fact, delayed the wall of water by five minutes and reduced its height in **Grantham** by up to 10cm.

Lockyer Valley mayor Steve Jones says, however, many questions about the water flows on that horror-filled day remain unanswered, and there should be another inquiry - a proposition rejected by Premier Newman.

Brown insists her investigation into the tragedy was about justice for the victims, not the dispute with the Wagners. John Wagner sees it differently. "I think that she thought that ...

by causing enough public grief we would offer a big rainbow cheque, but it worked the opposite way ... We had a fair bit of a blue," he says of the March 24 meeting. "I haven't heard from her since." Brown denies any ulterior motive. "I just considered it was the right thing to do," she says, her voice thick with emotion. "The value of this farm and where we would find ourselves never crossed my mind, and that's the truth."

The couple were away for Easter, visiting Jones and other friends in Sydney, when thieves hit their home again on Sunday, April 27. This time they went for Pascoe's property, including his Toyota LandCruiser. There was a further break-in the following night, and on the next day private security staff stopped yet another intrusion, according to the couple. Brown says she told the police they were being "intimidated", and she was afraid.

But she did not name anyone to the police. "What's the point," she says.

In a statement to this magazine, Queensland Police Service said two men and a 24-year-old Toowoomba woman had since been charged over the April 27 burglary, but there was no evidence to connect this incident to the subsequent incidents at the house over Easter or to the initial break-in of September last year. While the investigation was continuing, there was nothing to suggest the "offences are related in any way to the Wellcamp airport development", the QPS said.

Brown hopes to tell her story to the Senate inquiry into the Queensland Government, instigated by Clive Palmer's crossbenchers, where "the truth will come out". Meantime, she feels like a "refugee" in her home: trapped, unable to move on while the bitter dispute with the Wagners drags on. "Would I do it all over again?" she asks rhetorically. "No, I wouldn't. I would get out as fast as I could ... I wish I had never heard of this place."

It's a tangled web and it keeps growing, drawing in people who want no part of it. Earlier this year, John Wagner confronted the wealthy retail and horse racing entrepreneur Gerry Harvey over rumours he was "bankrolling" the campaign against the airport. Brown is a friend ("I've known Heather forever," Harvey says) and some of his thoroughbreds go to Plaintree Farms for spelling. Wagner Investments is also a big customer of Harvey Norman. Over lunch in his Sydney boardroom, Harvey assured Wagner that he was not involved. "I'm the meat in the sandwich and I don't see any point in my putting myself in that position," he says.

Dick Smith was pressed by Jones to come out against the airport, which he refused to do.

"I said, 'Look, Alan, I am positive about all aviation so there is no way I would want to criticise the airport'," he recalls.

"There really wasn't much more of a discussion when he realised I was so definitely pro-aviation."

If the intention was to turn public opinion in Toowoomba, it doesn't seem to have worked. The Wagners have hit back, hard, to defend their reputation.

The company's community and tourism development manager, Sara Hales, has doorknocked every house within a 5km radius of the site and spoken to about 400 people to date.

She takes along an electronic noise monitor to give them an idea of what they're in for. At close hand, conversation registers in the 50-60 decibel range - according to Hales, the maximum level of noise the neighbours would hear from aircraft coming and going. Those who want out have been made offers by the company - with the exception of Brown and Pascoe. One of the sellers, Les Smith, 64, who also breeds horses across the road from the airport, is delighted with his deal and will stay on the farm, having leased the land back from the Wagners. "Nothing but gentlemen," he says of them.

Mark Williams, 52, and his wife, Janice, 50, say John Wagner told them he was willing to buy their 200ha mixed cattle and cereal farm.

"There was no offer, he just said if there was a point that we wanted to, we should talk," Mark says. Pascoe and Brown don't speak for them, he maintains, and nor does Alan Jones: "I can't understand why he is so negative about the airport because if anyone was going to have a problem, it would be us." Two other affected landholders would not be quoted. Neither criticised the Wagners.

John Wagner says there's no mystery, no hidden agenda to what they're doing at Wellcamp.

They decided to build an airport, so they did, because they could and it made perfect sense to them, just as the cement works they constructed from scratch in Brisbane delivered value only they could see. "Everyone said we were crazy to do that, they said we didn't know what we were doing, we were dickheads," he says, his eyes steely. "And you know what, we've just tripled the capacity of the plant." The expansion cost \$45 million. When your pockets are that deep, the sky is the limit.

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[Return to List](#)

42 of 86 DOCUMENTS

The Australian

December 17, 2013 Tuesday
1 - All-round Country Edition

QUEENSLAND FLOOD REPORT PRODUCED TORRENT OF NONSENSE

BYLINE: NICK CATER

SECTION: FEATURES; Pg. 12

LENGTH: 984 words

What caused the events of January 10, 2011? Those affected deserve to know the truth

THERE are 658 pages in the Queensland Flood Commission's final report. Anzac Avenue is mentioned on only two of them.

The street is in the middle of Grantham, a town where 10 adults and two children died in the space of a few angry minutes on January 10, 2011.

If commissioner Catherine Holmes had lingered outside number 8, she might have asked why a flash **flood** resembling an inland tsunami struck here, of all places, a full 750m from **Lockyer** Creek, demolishing Brenda Ross's double-brick home.

Morva Richardson, who ran the neighbouring pub with her husband, Lance, watched the tragedy from the balcony. She caught a glimpse of Ross's 25-year-old son, Joshua, and family friend Chris Face peering out from the window.

"Next thing I know, the whole house seemed to pop up out of the water," Morva Richardson told a coronial inquest.

"And then it exploded."

Lance Richardson added: "The house went splat, I could not see anyone and I believed at the time they had no chance."

The mystery, unexplained by the Holmes commission or any other **inquiry**, is why all those in Grantham were caught by a torrent, several metres high, on flat ground so far from the creek's normal course.

Upstream at the foot of the Toowoomba Range, where the superstorm's runoff cascaded down narrow gullies, there were other deaths.

In this type of terrain, the deaths are more easily explained.

No convincing official explanation has been offered, however, for why the majority of flood deaths on January 10, 2011, occurred well beyond the point at which the landscape broadens out into a wide flood plain.

Two blocks to the left of the Ross home, a fruit shop and a former bank built of better block were damaged

so badly they had to be demolished.

On the other side of the road, at the corner of Harris Street, the old baker's building was washed from its foundations, coming to rest in the middle of the street.

Here is the curious thing. Further south on Harris Street, closer to the main creek, the damage was much lighter. Indeed, the nearer people were to the apparent conduit of the flood water, the greater their chances of survival.

An inquisitive commissioner might have raised an eyebrow at this point and asked why a torrent of water had strayed so far from the creek.

The cultural climate is not conducive to intellectual curiosity, however, particularly when it comes to the weather.

As Holmes said at the start of her report, "no recommendation made by the commission, even if implemented by the government, can control the forces of nature."

The commission was dogged by the same primitive fatalism that blighted much of the reporting that oozed out of southeast Queensland in a post-inundation sludge.

There were some courageous exceptions, notably by the late Paul Lockyer and The Australian's Hedley Thomas, but most journalists opted for sentimentalism rather than empiricism.

In any case, extreme weather events, as we are wont to call them, require little explanation since the science is settled, or so we are told.

Within two days, in an editorial illuminated by 1600km of separation, The Age declared: "A disturbing aspect of the floods is that they are consistent with (although not proof of) climate change predictions for northern Australia. Recent extreme weather events are part of climate change; arguments against taking action on greenhouse emissions on the grounds of cost look less persuasive, if not downright short-sighted."

The Holmes commission wisely avoided the intemperance of The Age. Instead, it simply fudged its answers to the tricky questions.

It took no evidence from a farmer who collected his cow, alive, after it was swept several kilometres to the east. Nor did it examine the cars and household detritus washed along in the flood that showed the path the water had taken.

The commission did not examine buildings and note on which side they had been damaged. If it had, it might have seemed curious that the torrent had come from the west while the creek lay to the south.

The commission held community meetings to find out what notions might be bouncing around in the locals' heads, but took no evidence from them, relying instead on the experts.

We already know, however, that the commission's initial findings, bristling with supposed expertise, were deeply flawed.

It found originally that releases from the Wivenhoe Dam further downstream could not be blamed for the floods that struck Brisbane.

Fortunately, Thomas helped them out of their muddle with diligent reporting in The Australian demonstrating that had water management officials been on their game, and released water from Wivenhoe earlier and more steadily, much of the damage to Queensland's capital would have been avoided.

The commission was recalled and the report rewritten. Arguably, it should have been shredded. The cursory attention paid to Grantham is further evidence this was a rush job.

QUEENSLAND FLOOD REPORT PRODUCED TORRENT OF NONSENSE The Australian December 17,
2013 Tuesday

Last Thursday, 2GB's Alan Jones aired allegations that a levee more than 2m high and 300m long on the upstream edge of Grantham quarry broke, causing the Lockyer Creek to jump its banks in a wave that veered towards the main streets of Grantham.

The commission's expert on hydrology used computer-modelling to demonstrate that the levee, 2km west of the town centre, was not to blame.

The computer-based conclusion is at odds with witness accounts and physical evidence.

Premier Campbell Newman must call a second commission of **inquiry**, and tell those who conduct it that he has no wish to see their report until they can show conclusively who is right.

Lockyer Valley residents deserve to know before the next big flood that the causes of the 2011 disaster have been established and, where possible, removed.

There can be no repeat of the unprecedented torrent of nonsense that surged out from every corner of the first **inquiry**.

caternc@gmail.com

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[Return to List](#)

46 of 86 DOCUMENTS



March 26, 2012 Monday

Rickuss: Did the flood teach them nothing?

BYLINE: Geoff Egan

SECTION: Pg. 12

LENGTH: 342 words

HIGHLIGHT: MP shocked at QR's failure to protect Lockyer rail lines

QUEENSLAND Rail's decision not to **flood**-proof the rail lines in the **Lockyer** Valley following last year's **flood** has left a local MP scratching his head.

LNP Member for Lockyer Ian Rickuss said the lack of drainage along the rail line turned it into a levee bank.

The recently released Flood Commission Report states that Queensland Rail did not consider improvements to the line after the flood were warranted.

"No other specific improvements were seen as being necessary, on either the metropolitan or the regional track systems, including on the West Moreton line running through the Lockyer Valley from Rosewood to Toowoomba," it reads.

The report said QR upgraded rail lines only in central Queensland with other lines restored to pre-flood condition.

"This meant restoring the network to its former 'flood-proof' status without making improvements to the flood immunity of any of its railways."

The section of the report stunned Mr Rickuss.

"The **Inquiry** should have asked residents of many of the towns and villages including Laidley, Forest Hill, Grantham and Murphy's Creek about the devastation and inundation caused by the lack of appropriate

Rickuss: Did the flood teach them nothing? The Queensland Times (Ipswich) March 26, 2012 Monday

culverts under the railway lines to allow the water to flow through and stop the railway lines acting as levee banks," he said.

Mr Rickuss said residents across the Valley and especially in Forest Hill, where the train lines run through the middle of the town, were concerned no lessons had been learnt from the flood that devastated their town.

However, a QR spokesman said drainage along the line was an ongoing concern.

"Queensland Rail is committed to working with the Lockyer Valley Regional Council and all other stakeholders with regards to drainage along the West Moreton rail line," he said.

"Queensland Rail will wait until the final report of the Lockyer Creek Flood Study is tabled before making any major decisions on future upgrades."

Despite his concerns regarding their actions after the flood Mr Rickuss praised QR's behaviour in the days leading up to the disaster when they closed the track.

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[Return to List](#)

35 of 86 DOCUMENTS



October 30, 2014 Thursday

Mayor backs new flood probe

BYLINE: Joel Gould

SECTION: Pg. 2

LENGTH: 430 words

LOCKYER Valley Mayor Steve Jones has backed a call for a royal commission into the **flooding** of **Grantham** in 2011 and its aftermath.

Independent Gaven MP Alex Douglas called for a royal commission "into all matters regarding what happened in **Grantham** before, during and after this so-called **flood** event" in state parliament on Tuesday.

Mr Douglas said there had been a "cover-up" in the subsequent **inquiries** into the flood that saw 12 lives lost in the Lockyer and millions of dollars worth of damage done.

The MP said in a statement on his website that critical eye-witnesses were refused the right to give specific testimony, which would have clarified what caused the flood and why it caused so much damage.

"It is not unreasonable to say this appears to be a cover-up," Mr Douglas said.

The MP called for the investigation to result in charges being sent to the Department of Public Prosecutions.

"We need to delve deeply into discovering what went wrong in Grantham," Mr Douglas said.

"We must identify what and whom were at fault.

"It should clarify what steps have to be taken, including taking full evidence from witnesses to verify what has occurred. It should then detail a path for prosecutions for those who were responsible."

Cr Jones said his council "had asked the government for an investigation, and we got a response saying they wouldn't".

"The flood **inquiry** looked at some matters in detail, but the people feel that there were a number of areas

Mayor backs new flood probe The Queensland Times (Ipswich) October 30, 2014 Thursday

that haven't been looked at," he said.

"I feel as though the government approached the flood **inquiry** looking for a scapegoat, and that scapegoat was me and the council."

The investigation council sought included determining "whether the railway line had any impact on tunnelling water into the town".

"The railway is like a big levee bank and is one of the things council was concerned about," Cr Jones said.

"We were concerned by statements made by residents about their concerns at the way police handled things after the flood."

Cr Jones said council was "continually bombarded" by residents about the impact of Grantham's quarry on the flood.

"We asked the State Government for an investigation into the flow of water between Grantham and Helidon and whether there was any effect during the flood and the way it was handled after the flood," he said.

Cr Jones said that in the Queensland Floods Commission of **Inquiry** there was "half a page on the quarry, I don't think it dealt with the railway at all";and the police matters have never been addressed".

Cr Jones said council would "support any investigation into those matters".

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Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

Reference number: *TF/15/15053*

Dr John Macintosh
Water Solutions Pty Ltd
john.mac@watersolutions.com.au

Dear Dr Macintosh

Engagement as hydrology expert for the Grantham Floods Commission

Instructions Letter #2 – Testing of hydraulic model

The Commission has obtained a number of eyewitness accounts concerning the flooding of the Lockyer Creek between Helidon and Grantham. Where it has been possible to do so, those eyewitness accounts have been recorded in the form of a statement provided to this Commission.

Statements provided to this Commission

To date, the Commission has provided you with the following statements taken in 2015:

1. Statement of Frances Ann Arndt;
2. Statement of Mr Graham Francis Besley;
3. Statement of Mrs Helen Besley;
4. Statement of Richard Cork;
5. Statement of Wayne Douglas Lack;
6. Statement of Neville Lester Mallon;
7. Statement of Charmaine Dianne Mallon;
8. Statement of Anthony McIntosh;
9. Statement of Mr Lance William Richardson.
10. Statement of Mrs Annaka Terese Sippel;
11. Statement of Mr Jonathan Sippel; and
12. Statement of Mr Gavin Noel Zischke.

Additional material

In addition to the above, we have also provided you with:

1. the following material concerning Mrs Helen Besley:
 - (a) excerpt of transcript of hearing before the Commission on 22 July 2015 containing the re-examination of Mrs Besley. A further copy is attached and marked 'A';

- (b) enlarged copy of the quarry area from the map referred to in Mrs Besley's statement (a further copy is attached and marked 'B'). That map has been annotated to include two further locations – the location of the Lockyer Creek and the location where Mrs Besley understood the Lockyer Creek was located at the time of providing her statement. Those locations were indicated on a map by Mrs Besley with a laser pointer during the hearing and are referred to in the excerpt of transcript that is attached;
- (c) a document containing the following material regarding the 000 call referred to at paragraph 21 of her statement:
 - (i) a police IMS extract of the 000 call which also refers to a further call made by 000 operator to Mrs Besley which was not answered; and
 - (ii) a transcript of the 000 call made by Mrs Besley. This transcript was prepared by the Commission by listening to the audio of the call. As previously advised, a copy of that audio can be provided to you if it is required.A further copy of that document is attached and marked 'C';
- 2. further digital images provided by Mr Anthony McIntosh which were provided to the Commission after his statement was signed. The images provided were taken on an iPhone on 10 January 2011; and
- 3. the following material regarding Mr Bruce Marshall:
 - (a) a reference aerial map of Grantham which has been annotated to indicate Mr Marshall's residence;
 - (b) an excerpt from the Coroner's Report regarding the circumstances relating to the death of Mr Bruce Marshall on 10 January 2011;
 - (c) copies of 000 transcripts and phone records relating to the phone calls placed or received by Mr Bruce Marshall prior to his death on 10 January 2011;
 - (d) a statement from Ms Fiona Latz (Mr Marshall's daughter) provided to the Queensland Police Service in 2011.

Further copies of this material is attached and marked "D".

Testing of the hydraulic model

The above material has been selected because it includes photographs, videos and/or phone records which can be used to assist you in ascertaining the timing and rise of the flood between Helidon and Grantham.

Further, we advise that the statement of Mr Richard Cork contains not only his personal account of the flooding on 10 January 2011 but survey work he has undertaken since that

date. In particular, it contains Mr Cork's opinion of the peak flood heights observed at a number of properties in Grantham.

The Commission requests that you consider this information for the purposes of testing your hydraulic model. Specifically, the Commission instructs you to take into account the following:

1. observations contained in that material as to the time/s at which the flooding occurs and the rise of the floodwaters observed; and
2. Mr Cork's opinion as to the peak flood heights observed at properties in Grantham.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to be 'Joanne Paterson', written over a large, light-colored oval shape.

Joanne Paterson
Director
Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

3 August 2015

Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

Reference number: *DOC/15/133333*

Dr John Macintosh
Water Solutions Pty Ltd
john.mac@watersolutions.com.au

Dear Dr Macintosh

Engagement as hydrology expert for the Grantham Floods Commission

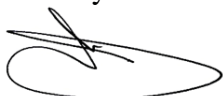
Instructions Letter #3 – Further Testing of hydraulic model

I refer to our previous letter dated 3 August 2015 concerning the testing of the hydraulic model in which the Commission requested you to consider a number of statements and associated materials for the purpose of testing your hydraulic model.

Further to those instructions, the Commission has now also provided you with the statement of Mr Troy Steffens, dated 2015, which includes a reference map that has been annotated to indicate the places and times that Mr Steffens took the photographs to which his statement refers and which are provided as an attachment to his statement.

The Commission requests that you consider this information for the purposes of testing your hydraulic model. Specifically, the Commission instructs you to take into account the observations contained in that material as to the time/s at which the flooding occurs and the rise of the floodwaters observed.

Yours sincerely



Joanne Paterson
Director
Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry
5 / 8 / 2015

Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry

Reference number: DOC/15/135527

Dr John Macintosh
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Dear Dr Macintosh

Engagement as hydrology expert for the Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry (the Commission)

Instructions Letter #4 – Further Testing of hydraulic model

I refer to our previous letter dated 3 August 2015 concerning the testing of the hydraulic model in which the Commission requested you to consider a number of statements and associated materials for the purpose of testing your hydraulic model.

Further to those instructions, the Commission now also provides you with an excerpt of the transcript of the hearing of the Commission on 21 July 2015. The excerpt provided includes the examination of Mr John Sippel regarding the telephone records referred to in his 2015 statement and Mr Sippell's recollection of events during this time.

The Commission requests that you consider this information for the purposes of testing your hydraulic model. Specifically, the Commission instructs you to take into account the observations contained in that material as to the time/s at which the flooding occurs and the rise of the floodwaters observed.

Yours sincerely



Joanne Paterson
Director
Grantham Floods Commission of Inquiry
7 August 2015

And did you come straight home from Toowoomba to your house or did you stop somewhere else?---No. We went - from Toowoomba we had organised lunch over at the family farm at Tenthill. So, we'd left Toowoomba and went
5 straight across to the family farm at Tenthill for lunch.

Is that your parents that live there?---Parents, yes.

And then after lunch you came home from there?---Yes. Well, I could hear they had been forecasting, you know, a lot of rain to fall. They hadn't sort of pinpointed areas. They just said there's a rain trough coming through and we could hear, at that stage, the rumbling of the storm to the north of Gatton and I'd said, "Look, if we don't go now, if that does happen to drop into Sandy Creek or anywhere in that area, it may well sort of cut access in Grantham,"
10 because it doesn't take much to sort of flood the centre of Grantham there with low lying water.
15

And do you remember what time you got home?---It would have been after lunch, around 1 o'clock I believe; 1.00 or 1.30, in or around those times.
20

And how do you remember that time?---Well, it was the boys were due to have a rest so we thought it's normally just after lunch we put them down for a sleep and we'd basically, yes, put them down to a sleep and Annaka and I just sat down for a cup of tea ourselves to wait to see what happened.
25

And what's your sister's name?---Amy.

And where does she live?---In Lilley Street, Toowoomba.

And did you receive a phone call from her at some stage that day?---Yes, I did receive a phone call. I think it was around 2.00 or 2.30. Sometime at 2.30 or somewhere around there, to say - she was in a panic saying that they had just been flooded in the neighbour's yard. They had had six inches of rain in so many minutes and that the underneath of their house was, you know, saturated.
30 It was a high set Queenslander which had a laundry and that downstairs. So, yes, she rang in a bit of a panic about that time.
35

And was she ringing in a panic about what was going on for her or also to warn you?---No, probably more so for her. She wasn't - she hadn't clued onto the fact that if it's rained where she is, so close to the escarpment, there's a good chance that it's rained on the eastern side of the escarpment and it was coming our way.
40

All right. Just so we can nail down some timing. If you have a look at your statement and you go to that attachment JS2.
45

MR SOFRONOFF: That's the phone records?

MR HODGE: That's the phone records, Mr Commissioner.

5

If you turn to the first page of that record that has a numeral 7 at the bottom of it. If you turn over to the second page, the first call at the top should have a sequence number 187 with a date of 6 January and a time of 2.48 pm. Are you on that page, Mr Sippel?---Yes.

10

And then if you go down to about sequence number 206?---Yes.

Do you see there's a call that was made on 10 January at 2.20 pm?---Yes.

15

And it's to a number. I take it that's a Toowoomba number?---Yes. That's my sister's number.

Okay. That's Amy?---Yes.

20

And so is it likely that what happened is she tried to call you and then you called her back?---I believe so, yes. There was another call there from Amy at 3.36. Yes, so I believe I tried to ring her and she's rung back.

25

Now, when did you first start observing the creek that afternoon?---It was about that time when Amy rang and said that they had had all that rain. I then made the decision, as you know living on farms all my life, I sort of made a decision, okay, there's a chance the creek could start rising in the next period of time so from then every so many minutes, you know, every five minutes or so I'd be going outside, jumping the fence, walking across and just having a look.

30

And just so that we can sort of get some physical sense of that, I might get that map brought back up again; the zoomed in map. So, we can see where your house is marked and we can see there's some distance between the back of your house and the actual creek?---Yes.

35

You said you had to jump a fence?---Yes. Between the house and the little shed just below the house there was a strand of plain wire on top instead of barbed wire. So it was always easier than trying to open the gate beside the shed. I just jump over.

40

I might get you to, with that laser pointer, just point that out for us?---That's the house there and the shed and I was jumping over just beside the shed there. There's some plain wire running between the two.

45

Having jumped over the fence could you then directly observe the

Lockyer Creek or did you need to walk down to it?---I'd have to just walk across the cow paddock which is probably 20 metres, 25 metres to the edge of the bank.

5 So the first time you remember doing that that afternoon was after you'd received that phone call from your sister?---Yes.

Then when you went down there how was the creek flowing at that time?
---Just flowing normally, no change at all, just well within its banks, just the
10 casual run that it had been since sort of the 27th.

How high was it?---It was probably half full, I would say. Yes, half full.

That's roughly some time after 2.20 pm. We can see then at 2.25 pm you make
15 a call to somebody you've annotated as Pete?---Yes, Pete. That would be my Uncle Peter at Lowood.

Do you remember why you were calling him?---It's a family thing. A sort of
pre-warning to the family residents, the family down the lower end of the
20 valley to say, "Look, the creeks are going to start rising," just for them to be able to prepare down there the next day. It takes a day or so to get there. Prepare their sheds and everything for it to come if it does break its banks down there.

25 Then we see the next call you made was at 3.19 pm?---Yes.

You've annotated that as being to Nev?---Yes, Neville Mallon.

Where did he live?---Neville Mallon is on the western side of our block. Yes,
30 that's Neville Mallon's there.

Do you remember why you were calling Neville Mallon?---Because Neville
and I were both sort of standing on the backs of our blocks there watching the
creek, probably letting him know what was coming, you know, what Amy had
35 rung and told me had happened up at the range in Toowoomba. So we sort of knew that there was a chance it would start rising.

He lived – it looks sort of roughly maybe 250 metres or so further up from you.
Would that be right?---Yes, it would be about that, two or three hundred metres
40 to the left.

How did you know he was on his bank? Did he call you?---No, I could just see him walking around watching.

45 You could just see him?---Yes.

By the time you're calling him – so this is now 3.19 pm – had you been back and forth a number of times from your house to the creek to check how it was going?---Yes. It's hard to say how many times. It could have been 10, 20,
5 could have been – but I know I'd been in and out, jumping that fence multiple times in that hour or so there while I was watching the creek.

Do you remember, by the time you were calling Neville Mallon at 3.19 pm, how high was the creek then?---It was starting at that stage to pick up a little bit
10 of speed and – you can see it sort of rising; not rapidly, just rising as it normally would if there was rain upstream.

Could you say how low below the bank it was?---At 3.19 - - -

15 It's all right if you're not sure?---It could have been three or four metres down the embankment, you know what I mean, easily led at that stage.

When you spoke to Neville Mallon was there any discussion about that embankment around the quarry?---Yes, it was a concern of both of ours, what
20 it was going to do, what cause it would have, if any at all. We were unsure but we were concerned that it may well push the water through our blocks rather than getting a clear run through the creek.

Who is Stephen Kluck?---That's our family member from Kapernicks Bridge
25 at Helidon, I think it is, the main bridge at Helidon.

Do you remember speaking to him that afternoon?---Yes.

Did he call you?---Yes, Stephen rang me.
30

What did he say to you?---He basically rang me – when I was standing on the creek bank the water at that stage was about a metre from the top. He rang me and said, basically, "Where are you? Are you home," and I said, "Yeah, I'm home." In other words, "Get out of there," he said. "How high is the water,"
35 and I'd said, "Look, mate, it's a metre from the top." No different to – or a couple of metres from the top. No different to 27 December. I said, "But it is sort of picking up speed, you know, like there's a fair bit of flow there." He then at that stage said, basically, "Get out of there," that the creek was about a foot underneath Kapernicks Bridge down on the other side of – onto the west
40 of the pit.

You're familiar, I take it, with Kapernicks Bridge?---Yes.

Have you ever seen the water a foot below?---I'd never seen it, no.
45

Never seen it that high?---No, never seen it that high.

If you look at your phone records you can see you then made a call at 3.30 pm to a number that you've annotated as Tom. I assume that's Tom Friend?

5 ---Yes, that's Tom Friend.

Why did you call Mr Friend?---I rang him around that time in relation to his cows, what he was wanting me to do with the cattle and telling him, you know, I was starting to get worried again about the water coming over the bank. Tom
10 had kept saying, "No, mate, you'll be right. Don't worry, buddy. You'll be right," you know, "Don't worry about it," and he said, "In 74 he never even come close," but my gut feeling kept saying no, something else is going to happen, yes.

15 Then about five minutes later you called Mr Mallon again?---Yes, Neville Mallon.

Was that just another conversation where the two of you were sort of talking about what you could see?---Yes, it was another conversation about what was
20 happening, what Neville could see, what I could see. At that stage – I just want to look at the records. Yes, at that stage I believe it was about the time Neville had said that he could sort of see it running into the northern edge of the pit. There was a bit of water running at the northern side there but at that stage I couldn't see any sort of water running just then. I was still jumping fences and
25 going to and from, getting things ready.

When he told you it was the northern edge of the pit, where did you understand that to be referring to?---Well, I understood that just to be behind his place, basically, right behind his place on the north-western corner. Basically, that
30 was, you know, a bit of an assurance, I suppose, that water was running into it, not, you know, getting held back, but we still knew there was a fair embankment there holding water. I assumed there was a fair embankment there holding water. I couldn't see the embankment.

35 From the spot that you were going to to look down at the Lockyer Creek, what part of the quarry could you see?---I could see straight through from the back corner, straight through the opening to the south-western corner to the pit.

MR SOFRONOFF: Mr Sippel, could you use the laser pointer to demonstrate
40 where you were and where you were looking in what you've just said?---Yes. I was standing right on the embankment here, just behind our house and sheds, jumping over. I could still see the house and everything. One of my last instances of jumping over to let the cows out I could see straight through the quarry opening here to the south-western corner to see water trickling over,
45 trickling down the corner. I couldn't see any other wall, any of this section,

due to these mounds of dirt beside me. All I could see was straight through the pit to that side.

Thank you.

5

MR HODGE: Now, when you said you saw the water trickling over at the point when you were letting the cows out, was that Mr Friend's cows?---Yes, Tom Friend's cows. Yes, the block behind my shed, in his paddock.

10 Where was Mr Friend?---He was away at Harbour Bay on holidays.

If we have a look at your phone records we can see that the last call you make to Mr Friend is at 3.39 pm?---Yes.

15 And so, do you remember, was that before or after you had let his cows out?
---That was just prior to letting his cows out, giving him basically one last chance to let them out because we were going. The water was - it had broken its banks on the northern side of the bank and it was running around my ankles, sort of around my shins, and I could see directly across the quarry, to the
20 south-western corner, that trickle of water sort of running over the top. So, yes, that was that last and then I let the cows out.

So, by the time you make that last phone call to Mr Friend to ask him if he wants you to let his cows out, the water has broken the banks of the Lockyer
25 Creek at your property?---Yes.

And the water has risen up to the point where you're standing so that it's about ankle deep?---Yes.

30 And you said the spot you were adopting was about maybe 20 metres or so away from where your house was?---Yes.

Was the water heading towards your house?---Yes. It was heading in a north-easterly direction, straight across the back of our block, between the shed
35 and house.

Had it reached your shed or house by that time?---Not by the time that I was letting the cows out but within seconds of jumping back over the fence I was jumping into water. You know, inches deep, two or three inches deep. Just a
40 slight run of water.

And before you made that phone call to Mr Friend you had seen the trickle of water coming over in that south-western corner?---In that south-western corner of the quarry.
45

And could you just describe to us how much water was there that you saw coming over?---It wasn't a great volume. It was just a trickle. It was visible, obviously, from about 400 metres away but not a great gush. You know, not water pouring over. It was just sort of running over. It was splashing down the side and that's what made my mind up we're out of here. We've got to go. You know, it had just broken its banks within the same period of time. That was our time to get out.

Did you see the amount of water coming over change at all?---No. I turned my back and took off.

And you never went back to that spot, I'm assuming?---No.

All right, and we can see from your phone records that at 3.42 pm you've called or you've annotated it as "The Farm"?---Yes.

That's where your parents were living?---Yes.

And do you remember why you called them?---Just to let them know that it's broken its banks, basically. I could see it coming over the top and we were out of there. It was a very quick, short, sharp phone call. Yes, basically letting them know that if they see anything or hear anything on the news or if they can't get in contact with us that we're getting out of there basically.

And then at 3.44 pm you called what's been annotated as Annie?---Yes.

I take it that's Annaka, your wife?---Annaka, my wife, who was inside the house with the boys still.

And so when you called her where were you?---Running from the - had just jumped the fence and running from there to the work shed to try and get my work ute and trailer out, to try to get it out the front of the house where I could then relay it up to the road and hopefully drive out.

And you had let the cows out by this stage?---Yes. I let the cows out and jumped the fence and then made those couple of phone calls whilst running to the shed.

And why did you call her?---Just to tell her, "Get some stuff together. We're out of here. It's happened basically. It's over. We've got to get what you can. Leave the boys asleep." Get what valuables she can get together and get ready to go.

And then we see at 3.46 pm you call Neville; and that's Neville Mallon?---At 3.46. Yes, I rang Neville, yes.

And do you remember why you called him?---Just letting him know we're getting out of there basically. You know, we couldn't make decisions up between us, Neville and I, what we were going to do, to stay or go or
5 backwards and forwards so that was my call to him to say, "Mate, we're gone. We're out of here. We're packing up and going," and it was at that stage we both started making a move.

And at the time when you start trying to get your vehicles out how high is the water in your property?---At that stage the water was - as I was driving from
10 the shed, sort of on a 45 degrees straight across our block for the front gate, the water was only 100 to 150mls deep just sort of running. You know, a gradual run with no great depth to it. That was about half way across the paddock. I bogged the ute. I got stuck in an old sort of wet section in the grass.

15 Can I just get you to pause for a moment?---Yes.

If you just look up at the map for us. So, perhaps if you just start by pointing out your shed where the vehicles were?---There. That one there.

20 So, if you could just get the microphone. I'm sorry about that. Thank you?
---That's the house. That's the old shed. The new shed was on the boundary beside Tommy's shed so it would be right here.

25 And just point out to us your gate if you would?---Our front gate - I'm just trying to see if it's behind. It's just at the top of there. That's the corner fence there going down. You see our gate is right on that top corner.

And so when you say you were driving across the paddock - - -?---Yes.

30 - - - could you just point out to us what that route was?---Yes. From here I've got a side gate onto Quarry Access, but rather than wasting my time trying to open gates, shut gates and mess around, I basically backed out. I knew the front gate was open that we had come in before so I basically just headed
35 straight around, through another little gate here near the shed, and straight across on a 45 degree for that front gate. It was about here, sort of mid-way across the block in front of the house, that I hit a soft patch where I just recently pulled out a heap of grape vines and disturbed the soil and the ute just sank.

40 And there's a path from your front gate down to your house?---Yes.

But it just runs straight down, from the front gate down to the house?---Front gate straight down. Yes, it's a gravel track.

45