Dear Brian,

The Mersey Valley at Merseylea has been and still is severely affected by the June floods.

For the locals the worst aspect has been the lack of speed in repairing a bridge for traffic to use. It will be almost 7 months for Hoggs bridge to be repaired and it will be nearly a year for the main bridge. This is causing terrible ongoing problems and could have been resolved early on if a Baily bridge span had been used to temporarily span the missing section of Hoggs bridge. It has cost me alone tens of thousands in time and disruption for all our normal work. Not to mention staff not being able to get to work. We have even had a manager leave due to this. So it has made it simply terrible as far as work load and access goes.

When the floods were happening there were two rescue helicopters flying around getting people out of houses. This was a good thing of course. But they were buzzing down low over cattle including mine which were a long way from houses. This pushed many of the cattle into strong currents where they would have normally stayed on high banks and not been washed away. We lost 20 head of dairy cows because of this.

The flood warning system needs a major upgrade. There were minor flood warnings on TV and it was only when we realized that the river had broken its banks on Sunday evening that we tried to shift animals. It was too late and we nearly had a staff member washed down the river. It wasn't until Monday morning that we received a text around 10.00am to say to evacuate. This was when the water was almost at its highest. The river came up 2m in about 20min on Sunday night around 7.00pm and better warning system would have made things a lot safer.

There are now many washouts and log jams down the river that are going to cause future problems if not attended to over the next 5 months. These need working on very soon or we could see a repeat of washed out bridges with a smaller flood in the future.

Tas networks have done mostly a good job on getting power back on. But pump sites that were washed away have been a big issue getting power back on. There seem to be two very separate departments within the organization that don't communicate. We put applications in for new parts to repair the power board for the pumps early in September and are still waiting. This has been very frustrating with one part of Tas networks treating it as a new installation when it's been there for 40 years and another turning up unannounced to reconnect what hasn't been repaired due to no one sending the parts. On top of this they are still billing us on an automatic calculation for what they think we should have used. More phone calls and time wasted on trying to sort it out!

Thanks for your time in reading this.

Kind regards

Paul Lambert

10/11/16