



TW HPRM ref: 16/124989

10 November 2016

Mike Blake

Review Investigator
Government Flood Review Team
GPO Box 308
Hobart TAS 7001

For the attention of Brian Edmonds

Dear Mr Blake

Government Flood Review – June 2016

I refer to your letter addressed to our CEO Michael Brewster requesting feedback on relevant strategic issues identified during the June floods. To this end please find below the following observations for your consideration.

As you would be aware, during the week commencing 5 June 2016, an east coast low hit New South Wales, Victoria and North/North west Tasmania and caused some of the most severe flooding that Tasmania has experienced since the catastrophic floods affected the State in 1929. The June floods in Tasmania required major flood warnings to be issued for an unprecedented seven rivers.

Multiple communities and TasWater infrastructure were impacted by the flooding. In order to manage the immediate response our Incident Management Team operated on a state wide basis and required the establishment of an Emergency Operations Centre (EOC) in Launceston supported by two satellite centres in Hobart and Forth. The EOC operated 24 hours a day for the period 08:00 Monday 6 June to 17:00 Thursday 9 June 2016 and involved 23 personnel and, to date, is the largest incident TasWater has managed.

Together with the internal incident management protocols and framework, the organisation participates and works within the current State framework consisting of:

- Regional Emergency Management Committees in the South, North and North West of Tasmania. Participating when multiple agency incident exercises are conducted and during declared incidents despatch a liaison officer as required
- Informal Critical Infrastructure forum.

The incident framework (internal and State) enabled us to effectively and efficiently respond to the June wet weather event, whilst having continuous engagement with the relevant regulators and stakeholders.

Within our incident protocols for infrastructure that is identified as being inundated, where possible, the plant is de-energised and any chlorine gas/liquid disconnected and removed to a safe location to provide safety to public and employees, and minimise impact to the environment.

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On conducting an internal debrief and relevant interviews, the following opportunities for improvement have been identified:

- Investigate improving the protocols with Department of Health and Human Services to reduce the time taken to approve and communicate Temporary Boiled Water Alerts
- Investigate the ability for essential services like TasWater to be able to directly access TASALERTS to broadcast localised community alerts
- Availability to provide and receive real time information with the utilisation of a common state Disaster Management IT platform to essential agencies
- Investigate availability of providing upstream water level monitoring information/alarms direct access to TasWater for improved readiness and response actions and
- State to categorise weather events with relevant river modelling made available to essential service providers etc to assist with future capital programs and specific asset design.

The transition from responsive to recovery is critical with the timely sharing of inter-agency information to assist with the efficient strategic delivery and utilisation of resources whilst managing stakeholder and community expectations. The setup of the Tasmanian Flood Recovery Team went some of the way to assist with this aspect, but inter agency dependencies could be further developed to ensure integrated recovery is known and communicated. Whilst we were able to quickly engage external service providers as required to provide assistance with technical assessments to determine the recovery required, progress was constrained by the damage being spread over a wide geographical area.

TasWater continues to invest and develop organisational resilience as part of our Corporate Strategy and is in the process of completing:

- A purpose built centre, based at Devonport, for an integrated emergency management response team located within the 24/7 Network Operations Centre and Contact Centre to enable quick and efficient flow of information
- Deployment of a new Works Management System, Maximo, to enable real time tracking of responsive works supported with hand held electronic tablets and a central Schedule and Despatch facility for the whole of the state.

Should you have any further queries, please do not hesitate to contact me on 6422 5387.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Andrew Moir".

Andrew Moir
General Manager Asset & Product Management