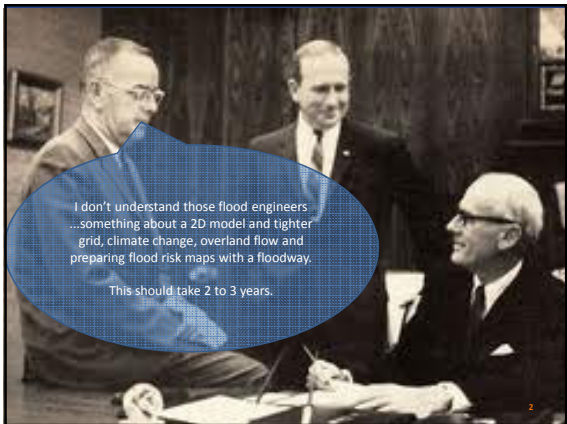


A little while after a floodplain risk management committee meeting, the planners debrief...



Floodplain Management Association National Conference 28-31 May 2013 Tweed Heads NSW

**TIME TO STOP BLAMING THE PLANNERS  
HOW FLOODPLAIN MANAGERS CAN  
IMPROVE THE PLANNING PROCESS**

Paul Grech      Drew Bewsher  
GLN Planning      Bewsher Consulting

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*"In land use planning, attention to flood risk has been ad hoc"*



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### What we did in the paper

- Revisited 2007 survey
- Extended to include Queensland
- 202 planners responded
- Discuss current policy framework
- Examine understanding of FRM policy and principles.
- Suggest how to improve the guidance provided to planners



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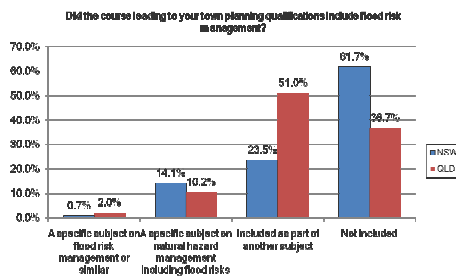
### Queensland & NSW

- Local Government is lead agency
- Both promote the 100 year flood as a default standard.
- Both ultimately promote a merit based / risk management approach.
- In Qld FRM policy in within the planning system – in NSW its separate.




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### Did the course leading to your town planning qualifications include flood risk management?

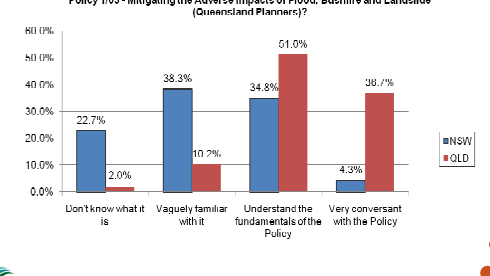


Response	NSW (%)	QLD (%)
A specific subject on flood risk management or similar	0.7%	2.0%
A specific subject on natural hazard management including flood risks	14.1%	10.2%
Included as part of another subject	23.5%	51.0%
Not included	61.7%	36.2%




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### Are you familiar with the NSW Flood Policy (NSW Planners) or State Planning Policy 1/03 - Mitigating the Adverse Impacts of Flood, Bushfire and Landslide (Queensland Planners)?




Familiarity Level	NSW (%)	QLD (%)
Don't know what it is	22.7%	2.0%
Vaguely familiar with it	38.3%	10.7%
Understand the fundamentals of the Policy	34.8%	51.0%
Very conversant with the Policy	4.3%	36.7%



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### Knowledge of Manual Or Guideline


- Qld – 82% very conversant or understood basics.
- NSW – 48% very conversant or understood basics.
- However, only 25% of Qld planners were very conversant or understood basics of SCARM.



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What do you understand to be the flood standard in your state? (More than one response may be chosen).


Answer Options	QLD Response Percent	NSW Response Percent	Total Response Percent	Total Response Count
No specific standard - determined on merit	6.4%	6.1%	6.1%	11
The largest recorded historical flood	19.1%	2.3%	6.6%	12
100 year flood	76.7%	81.1%	88.7%	146
200 year flood	4.3%	1.5%	2.2%	4
Possible maximum flood (PMF)	18.1%	38.6%	34.3%	62
Don't know	4.3%	3.0%	3.3%	6
Other (please specify)	27.7%	12.1%	16.0%	29
			answered question	181
			skipped question	29



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### Declining Understanding


- Less than 5% of planners understand how the flood standard is determined.
- This a reduction since the 2007 Survey that found that only 12% of NSW planners understood the flood standard was merit-based



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### Adequacy of policies and guidelines


- ½ considered FRM Policy and Manual/Guidelines provides practical guidance for either strategic planning or development assessment tasks
- ½ considered these documents did not provide practical guidance or did not know.



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### Perceived role of Town Planners


- ⅓ - flood risk protection of property should extend to PMF.
- ½ - flood risk protection for personal safety should extend to PMF.
- ⅔ - proactively inform the community of all known flood risks whether they ask or not.
- 93% - FRM is a shared responsibility for planners, engineers and others.



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### Issues raised


- Advisory documents are difficult to understand and not tailored to planners.
- Policies are difficult to understand and contradictory.
- LG control of FRM has led to fragmented and inconsistent outcomes.
- FRM process is complicated, costly and time consuming



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### Solutions offered

- Technical advisory document tailored to town planners.
- Simple legible maps.
- Promote FRM within the planning profession.
- Community education




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### 1. Policy Structure

- Keep but tailor FRMS and FRMPs to the context.
- Qld – indemnity against legal action.
- NSW – make FRM process part of planning system.
- Disband default limitation of FRM considerations in planning documents to a singular flood.




### 2. Guidelines

- To provide planners with basic tools
  - reading flood data;
  - flood risk mapping;
  - the extent of floodplain apply FRM controls;
  - relative flood sensitivity of different land uses;
  - typical FRM development controls;
  - what to do when no flood data or policies exist;
  - what FRM information to notify.

### 3. Education

- Nationally employ initiatives such as the FMA/OEH FRM Sydney course.
- Input to undergraduate planning courses.
- Training courses on use of guidelines when produced.

