

Response to the Deputy Premier and Bundaberg's Mayors' news article
last week

In February 2013 the total flood damage to Bundaberg was estimated to be in excess of \$200 million according to an ABC News Report who had been talking with the then Deputy Mayor, David Batt. Including patients from the Hospital 7500 people were evacuated as a direct result of the flood.

To my knowledge only a small percentage of evacuations were performed in East or South Bundaberg and the majority were from the North Side of Bundaberg where it was reported that up to 1000 people had to be airlifted to safety and 20 homes were destroyed completely. How can our Deputy Premier claim that experts had proven that the levee will have the largest mitigation impact for most of the Bundaberg community?

He is obviously very much out of touch with reality, and I challenge him to debate and substantiate that claim. Creating 600 jobs over 3 years, as he claims just fades into insignificance compared with the alternative of potentially saving hundreds of lives over North.

Mr Dempsey claims that the levee will reduce insurance premiums. I think this is possibly true but only for Hinkler Place and a couple of other businesses and maybe only a few residents over South and East. North and West and elsewhere in Bundaberg will more likely see increases in their premiums as the truth about the real impacts of the levee become known.

I would also like Mr. Dempsey to provide the necessary accurate and updated figures to support his contentious belief that the levee is the most cost-effective option.

Mr Dempsey's claim that engineers have said "**there is no affordable way to flood proof North Bundaberg**" is yet to be determined as, to my knowledge no thorough costs and benefits have been accurately conducted.

In my opinion If diversion of some of the flood water can be achieved, then all flood river heights in the future will be significantly lower, and all areas of Bundaberg would benefit. The financial benefits in the short and long-term would-be mind blowing so let's think ahead for a change. Imagine if it could be demonstrated that all of Bundaberg was protected against serious flooding in the future.

Forget about some of the big money projects that are currently on the table, borrow the money to finance a mitigation project that will benefit all of Bundaberg forever.

Sid McKeown