



Our Ref: CO45

Mr AP O'Gorman, MLA
Chair
Community Development and Justice Standing Committee
Parliament House
PERTH WA 6000

Dear Mr O'Gorman

**INQUIRY INTO THE RECOGNITION AND ADEQUACY OF THE RESPONSES
BY STATE GOVERNMENT AGENCIES TO EXPERIENCE OF TRAUMA BY
WORKERS AND VOLUNTEERS ARISING FROM DISASTERS**

Thank you for your letter dated 12 September 2011. We appreciate your interest in the wellbeing and trauma of our workforce and volunteers in the Gascoyne.

The unexpected flood disaster experienced in Carnarvon and Gascoyne Junction in December 2010, was out of the ordinary.

Extensive damage was caused throughout the region with losses in excess of \$100 million. The impact was felt by the horticultural, pastoral and tourism industries as well as local small business.

GDC staff were involved with the initial emergency response through the provision of staff to the Fire and Emergency Service Authority to assist with communications to the pastoral properties, preparation of food parcels and coordination and input to the economic recovery committee. It should also be noted that some GDC staff were personally affected by the flood through water inundation of their own properties.

In response to your request for information we advise as follows:

- Our agency did not have any reported evidence of trauma during the natural disasters which occurred since 2001.
- Our agency does not provide an avenue for this form of reporting, and any barriers experienced, would be unknown.

- As we had no reported evidence of health impacts and trauma, no measures were taken in regards to any trauma that could have been experienced by our staff.
- We have no pre-planning or training activities for staff volunteers undertaken by the agency, as we are a small unit of 12 equivalent full time employees.
- No provision is made in our annual budget for pre-event or post event activities, as we are dependent on a minimal service appropriation by the State Government.
- We have no resources, counselling programs or budget to provide any trauma related activities which could arise in the aftermath of a disaster.
- As a regional agency in a cyclone prone area our cyclone preparedness policy is reviewed annually.

Yours sincerely



Stephen Yule
Chief Executive Officer

27 October 2011