

OEH Flood Warning

Hunter Region, NSW

Background

In June 2007 an intense low pressure weather system developed over the Hunter region of NSW. It brought torrential rainfall, storm-force winds and severe ocean conditions, causing the largest flood in the Hunter River for 36 years. Manly Hydraulics Laboratory (MHL) had a critical role in capturing and delivering vital real-time data for emergency services responding to the floods.

Project Scope

On behalf of the Office of Environment & Heritage (OEH) MHL operates a network of field stations that record rainfall, water level, barometric pressure and ocean wave data in NSW. The data is also accessed by the Bureau of Meteorology (BoM) for their coastal storm and flood alert warning system and the State Emergency Service (SES) who use the data when responding to a storm or flood event.

Our Role

MHL manages a coastal data network of over 1000 stations that provide real-time water level, rainfall and ocean wave data. The network includes over 350 flood level monitoring stations. This real-time data is made available to the public via the Internet.

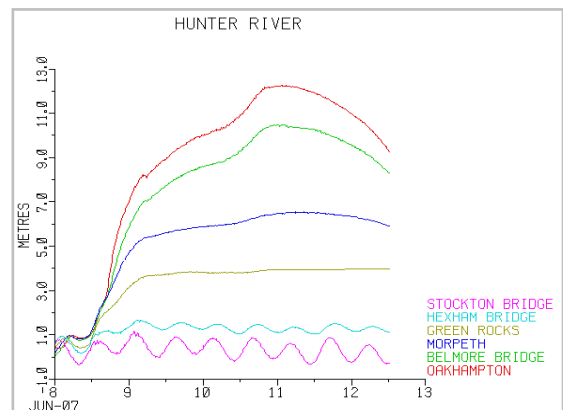
During the June 2007 flood, MHL's flood recorders and field personnel recorded extreme conditions including major flooding at Gostwyck Bridge, Paterson Railway Bridge and Oakhampton; wave heights over six metres in Sydney and a rainfall intensity of approximately 1-in-100-year return period at Gostwyck. All data was publicly available on the Web.

Outcomes

- The real-time data captured and delivered via the Internet by MHL was critical in helping agencies such as SES, BoM and OEH respond to the Hunter flood event.
- The information was vital for important decisions such as the evacuation of communities and the management of road closures.
- MHL personnel were awarded a State Medal for their service during the flood event.



Emergency services responding to flooding



Overplot of flood peaks for the Hunter River



Flooding in the Hunter region, June 2007