



Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,
Minister for Science and Minister for the Arts

Our Ref: CTS 28162/18
Your Ref: A367123

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17 OCT 2018

Mr Neil Laurie
The Clerk of the Parliament
Parliament House
George Street
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 19 September 2018 enclosing a copy of Petition No. 3008-18 regarding a flying-fox colony located near Francis and Gregory Streets, Macleay Island.

The Queensland Government appreciates that flying-foxes can be a source of unpleasant noise and smell. The Queensland Government's approach to flying-fox roost management aims to provide ways of reducing adverse impacts caused by flying-fox roosts, particularly in populated areas, without compromising the long-term conservation of these animals which play an important role as pollinators of many native plant species.

The Department of Environment and Science has been advised by the Redland City Council that the majority of the flying-foxes located near Francis and Gregory Streets, Macleay Island, have left the site since the tabling of the petition and that, as at 26 September 2018, there remain only 100 to 200 grey-headed flying-foxes present.

Local governments have an as-of right authority under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* (the NC Act) to use non-lethal measures in managing flying-fox roosts in urban flying-fox management areas provided they comply with the 'Code of Practice – Ecologically sustainable management of flying-fox roosts' for that activity. However, councils are not obligated to take action under the code. As this colony is located within such an area, the Redland City Council (the Council) is empowered under the Act to conduct roost management activities without needing a permit, if it chooses to do so. The Council's Statement of Management Intent For Flying-Fox Roost Management In Redland City Council is available on the Council's website at indigiscapes.redland.qld.gov.au/Animals/Documents/RCC-Statement-of-Management-Intent_Web-version.pdf.

If the Council does not choose to take any action, private individuals can apply for a flying-fox roost management permit (FFRMP) from the Department of Environment and Science (the department) at www.ehp.qld.gov.au/wildlife/livingwith/flyingfoxes/roost-management.html. I would encourage parties interested in obtaining a FFRM to contact the department via telephone on 1300 130 372 or email at palm@des.qld.gov.au to arrange a pre-lodgement meeting. More information is available on the department's website at www.ehp.qld.gov.au/wildlife/livingwith/flyingfoxes/questions-answers.html#how_can_members_of_the_public_manage_flying-fox_roosts_and www.ehp.qld.gov.au/wildlife/livingwith/flyingfoxes/roost-management.html.

Local residents can undertake low impact activities such as weeding, mulching, mowing or minor tree trimming without requiring a permit. These activities are to be conducted in accordance with

the 'Code of Practice – Low impact activities affecting flying-fox roosts', which is available on the department's website at www.ehp.qld.gov.au/wildlife/livingwith/flyingfoxes/pdf/cp-wl-ff-low-impact-roosts.pdf.

I have been advised that, as it appears there are federally listed 'vulnerable' grey-headed flying-foxes present that are breeding or rearing their young in this roost, any activity likely to disturb them may also require federal consideration under the Commonwealth *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* (EPBC Act). Further information in relation to these requirements is available on the Australian Department of Environment and Energy's website at www.environment.gov.au/biodiversity/threatened/species/flying-fox-law.

Queensland Health advises the already low risk of contracting a virus can be further minimised by avoiding any contact with flying-foxes. In the rare event a person is bitten or scratched by a bat, there is a post-exposure vaccination to minimise the possibility of transmission of Australian Bat Lyssavirus (ABLV). ABLV is unlikely to survive outside the bat, in faeces, for more than a few hours, especially in dry environments that are exposed to sunlight. The other virus of concern that can be carried by flying-foxes, Hendra virus, can only be transmitted to humans from horses. A pre-exposure vaccination is available to protect horses against Hendra virus. More detailed information regarding potential health risks from flying-foxes is available on the Queensland Health website at: <http://conditions.health.qld.gov.au/HealthCondition/condition/14/33/14/Bats-human-health>.

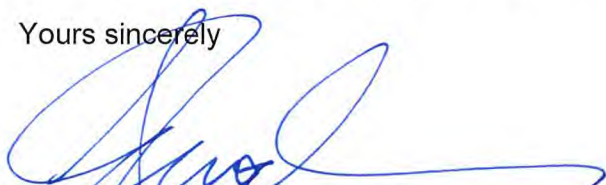
It is important to note that the Queensland Government does not support the culling of flying-foxes as an urban roost management method and the department would not approve any application to cull flying-foxes for this purpose under Queensland's nature conservation laws.

It is also important to remember that flying-fox numbers at a particular location can fluctuate significantly and rapidly as flying-foxes come and go in search of food, and that a significant increase in numbers may only be a temporary occurrence. For this reason, in 2016 the Queensland Government announced a \$2.7 million research program into little red flying-fox migration and behaviour, which is seeking scientifically-sound information to help improve the way flying-fox roosts are managed. The outcomes of this research will provide improved guidance for local governments across the state in effectively managing urban flying-fox roosts.

I would be pleased if you would arrange for the tabling of this letter in response to the Petition in accordance with Standing Order 32.

I trust that this information has been of assistance to the petitioners.

Yours sincerely



Leeanne Enoch MP

**Minister for Environment and the Great Barrier Reef,
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