



Hon Dr Steven Miles MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and
Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef

Ref CTS 03740/17

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7 MAR 2017

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

Dear Mr Laurie

I refer to your letter of 17 February 2017 enclosing a copy of Petition Nos. 2662-16 and 2708-17 lodged in the Queensland Legislative Assembly. Please accept this letter as my response to this petition and I request that, under Standing Order 125, you table the response by Thursday, 16 March 2017.

In Queensland, local governments have an as-of-right authority under the *Nature Conservation Act 1992* to manage flying-fox roosts, including roost dispersal, in designated urban flying-fox management areas, provided they comply with the 'Code of Practice – Ecologically sustainable management of flying-fox roosts' (Code). The sponsoring member Mr Cripps will be familiar with the legislative framework for management of flying-fox roosts as it was introduced by the former LNP government in which he served as a cabinet minister.

The Code is applicable to Hinchinbrook Shire Council's (Council) management of flying-foxes in the Keith Payne VC Botanical Gardens in Ingham. I can confirm that Council did undertake roost management activities under the Code at this roost site, which is on Council land, in late 2016.

I note the petition also raises the issue of public health. Queensland Health advises the low risk of contracting a virus from a flying-fox can be reduced by avoiding any contact with these animals. In the rare event a person is bitten or scratched by a flying-fox, there is a post-exposure vaccination available to minimise the possibility of transmission of Australian Bat Lyssavirus.

Should you have any further enquiries, please contact Mr Lindsay Delzoppo, Director, Wildlife Assessment, Strategic Compliance and Northern Operations of the Department of Environment and Heritage Protection on telephone (07) 3330 5393.

Yours sincerely

DR STEVEN MILES MP
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and
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