



MEDIA RELEASE

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For immediate release

BALGAL BEACH BATTLING FLYING FOXES AGAIN

Hinchinbrook MP, Andrew Cripps, has called on the Bligh Labor Government to take immediate action to move on a huge colony of flying foxes that has taken up residence adjacent to homes at Balgal Beach, subjecting local residents to intolerable levels of noise, unpleasant odours and the threat of disease, saying public safety must come first.

Mr Cripps said it was history repeating itself after he had previously raised the issue of the flying fox colony at Mystic Sands in State Parliament in November 2007, stating that the then EPA had refused to take effective action to move on the flying fox colony, preferring instead to subject local residents to significant health risks and diminished quality of life.

“DERM must not take the same attitude this time around. I have written to Environment Minister, Vicky Darling, requesting DERM take immediate steps to move on the flying fox colony, estimated to be tens of thousands in number, to protect the health and well being of local residents. I have urged the Minister not to delay or procrastinate” said Mr Cripps.

“Local residents are reporting large volumes of flying fox excreta being dropped on their homes and not feeling safe to move around their back yards, or hanging out their washing. Given there are serious threats to human health from contact with flying foxes, it is a matter of public safety for DERM to facilitate the moving on of this flying fox colony” he said.

Mr Cripps said in contrast to the head in the sand attitude of the Bligh Labor Government, the LNP had announced a strong policy on flying fox management, stating that a Newman LNP Government would work with councils and landholders affected by nuisance flying fox colonies to ensure human health and agricultural productivity are not adversely affected.

“The Bligh Labor Government claims it issues damage mitigation permits to councils to move on flying fox colonies that adversely impact on local communities, but DERM takes forever to process them. When it does issue them, they are full of unrealistic conditions that render the permit almost useless. Meanwhile, residents continue to suffer” said Mr Cripps.

“A Newman LNP Government will overhaul the damage mitigation permit system in relation to moving bat colonies on. The LNP will provide faster approvals that are responsive to the needs of local communities, allowing all reasonable measures of relocation to be used to ensure the permits are effective. Under the LNP, public safety will come first” he said.

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