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MEDIA STATEMENT:

29 July 2013

Experts refute claims by QPWS that ear tagging Fraser Island dingoes has no impact.

It seems that QPWS is defending the use of ear tags on Fraser Island dingoes by suggesting that permanently damaged ears do no harm.

Experts refute this claim. Emeritus Professor, Michael Bryden, from the Faculty of Vet. Science at the University of Sydney, states the following, 'It is with alarm I learned of the practice of tagging the ears of dingoes on Fraser Island.

Apart from the obvious animal welfare concerns..it is indefensible in scientific terms..dingoes are predators and the sense of hearing is critical to predatory success..a tag large enough to recognise an individual from a distance must interfere with the mobility of the ear....the fact that in some cases damage to the ear cartilage causes major distortion makes the situation significantly worse.'

These findings are echoed around the country by dingo experts such as John Marsh, Manager, Potoroo Palace, Native Animal Education Sanctuary, Merimbula, NSW. 'Dingoes have the ability to swivel or rotate each ear independently, thus giving them a big advantage in locating their prey, anything that interferes or limits this ability would, without a doubt, interfere with their ability to hunt efficiently...any physical difference, such as a tag, places the dingo lower down in the hierarchy of the group, to the point of exclusion.'

The RSPCA does not endorse tagging pups. 'Best practice' worldwide suggests native animals should not be interfered with under 12 months of age.

Despite the release of the Fraser Island Dingo Conservation and Risk Management Strategy (FIDCRMS) it is evident animal welfare issues and visitor safety are still a concern.

The dingo recently destroyed was considered a threat since he was a pup, why was the situation allowed to escalate to the point where a visitor was put at risk and an animal destroyed? QPWS are presently hunting another dingo. What Intervention policy is in the FIDCRMS to prevent this from happening again?

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