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OUR REFERENCE MN

25 July 2011

Ms Anna Bligh,
Premier of Queensland,
Executive Building,
100 George Street,
BRISBANE Qld 4000

By Email: thepremier@premiers.qld.go.au

Dear Ms Bligh,

FRASER ISLAND DINGOES – YOUR REFERENCE: MC/NC –TF/11/14816-DOC/11/77718

In reply to your letter of 20 May 2011, I have been instructed by my clients to respond and to raise the following as matters of serious concern.

We understand the strategy was designed in 1998 and released for public opinion in 1999, and was in the process of being implemented when the attack against Clinton Gage took place in 2001. Please let us have your comments in this regard.

Insofar as your statement “the objects of the Fraser Island dingo management strategy include conserving a sustainable wild dingo population on the island”, please advise what research has been carried out and by whom to establish what a sustainable population of dingoes on the island would be.

With respect to your comments:

“...reducing the risk posed to humans by dingoes on Fraser Island to an acceptable (low) level”. Please advise what was the alleged “risk” to humans prior to the implementation of management by QPWS in 1992. Please provide full details of all incident reports for this period.

Insofar as your comments “and to provide visitors with an opportunity to view dingoes in an environment as near as possible.....with as little as possible.”

My clients comment, trapping, hazing, tagging and collaring can only be seen as counteractive to the key principle of the strategy, as noted above. Please let us have your explanation.

Will you also please advise which countries recognize the strategy, and for what purpose?

It is understood the original FIDMS were co-authored by Laurie Corbett and Colin Lawton. Will you please confirm this and advise at the time of authoring the strategy what qualifications did Colin Lawton have?

The strategy is, to the best of my client's belief, designed some 20 years ago. Please advise the names of the scientists at that time that contributed to it.

In addition, please advise what published, scientifically, peer-reviewed document it is based upon.

It is understood that a requirement of the strategy is scientific peer-reviewed approvals, which is written into the strategy itself. Will you please advise when and where these were published?

Will you please also advise who are the qualified scientists on this current management team that you refer to.

For what period of time have independent scientists (other than DERM) spent specifically working on Fraser Island observing and studying dingo ecology and behaviour?

What are the credentials of your "professional conservation officers".

Please provide full details of alleged aggressive dingo-human interaction across Fraser Island prior to 1992.

With reference to paragraph 4, please advise the method DERM adopt to destroy dingoes. It is understood to be an injection of valbarb directly into the heart, primarily because rangers are not qualified to inject anaesthetic. Please let us have your response on this issue.

What are the qualifications of rangers on the island who destroy dingoes and conduct autopsies?

With reference to paragraph 5, please advise the basis upon which DERM conclude the Fraser Island dingo population "is not starving".

Referring to paragraph 7, Fraser Island dingoes are a unique species of dingo which has had a long history of being fed by people. What specific scientific evidence are you able to provide that feeding Fraser Island dingoes causes aggression?

It is commonly understood by locals, visitors and the indigenous caretakers of the island that Fraser Island dingoes enjoy interacting with people.

In response to paragraph 8, it is noted the possibility for Fraser Island dingoes to regulate their population size in response to available natural resources is not possible, given the interference and disturbance by humans. It is my client's belief human intervention is necessary to restore the balance.

In what manner can you support culling dingoes without an admission that such culling can only interfere with the dingo's ability to regulate their own population size. Please provide your comments on this issue.

In respect of paragraph 9, an analysis of the incident reports disclose that a high number of incidents were instigated by rangers.

Will you please provide copies of what evidence you hold to prove that the dingoes Ms Parkhurst had fed became habituated and “behaved dangerously”, including several attacks on children. Insofar as your allegations, please provide a copy of each of the incident reports that led to the destruction of the dingoes Ms Parkhurst had allegedly fed.

In your letter you state that in February 2011 there were more than 235 dingoes on the active ear tag register. Please clarify, does this mean that 234 dingoes were alive in 2011.

Please provide details of where the Population Study was published, as required by the FIDMS.

Will you please provide full details of the “Ethics Committee”

Your reference to the RSPCA is unclear as the RSPCA state that the practices of the DERM rangers are endorsed by the FIDMS and as such cannot be considered cruel. Please provide an explanation for your reference to the RSPCA.

My clients request a list of the names of which dingo experts, scientists and wildlife welfare organizations support the FIDMS.

Yours Sincerely

Marilyn Nuske

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Principal Solicitor
OCEAN LEGAL