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To Whom It May Concern

Re: Flying-fox Control Amendment Bill

I'm an ecologist with almost 25 years of experience managing wildlife populations. I'm the founder and Managing Director of two successful Queensland consultancy businesses, Avisure and Ecosure, employing over 80 staff. Avisure are market leaders in the aviation industry, providing advice on mitigating the risk of birdstrike. Ecosure is an ecological consultancy with a deep history in wildlife management. Some of Ecosure's projects include ibis management programs for over 16 years, a review of dingo management on Fraser Island, vertebrate pest management for Defence sites, and flying-fox management.

In 2011, Ecosure completed an assessment of the Hendra Virus risk at Bundall Equine Precinct for Gold Coast City Council. The risk was deemed too great to allow this recently formed colony to establish long term, and through habitat management we successfully dispersed the camp in a project described by EHP (then DERM) as "exemplar". We have subsequently completed a City-wide review of all flying-fox camps on the Gold Coast and recommended various staged management options for flying-foxes, dependent on the risk particular camps pose to the community. We therefore come to this discussion with solid experience in wildlife management and are pragmatic enough to know that management in some circumstances is warranted – we are not radical or on the side of native wildlife at all costs. But we are concerned.

In June this year I met with the Environment Minister Andrew Powell and I expressed my concerns that open slather on flying-fox camps would splinter the problem and cause even greater community discontentment and elevate disease risks. He assured me that open slather camp dispersal was not on the agenda. It is therefore of great concern to see the proposed [Land Protection Legislation \(Flying-fox\) Amendment Bill](#) which has been referred to the Agriculture, Resources and Environment Committee.

In the late 80's after graduating from University, I started my career as an urban pest controller, treating people's homes for pests such as German Cockroaches. After several summers, I was experienced enough to walk into a house and within minutes I could tell the extent of the infestation and what would be involved to treat it. A bad infestation, where the occupants had left them alone would be easy to deal with - the cockroaches would be focused in the kitchen, behind the fridge, around the dishwasher and occasionally in a few warmer spots around other rooms in the house. On the other hand, when the occupants thought they



would take matters into their own hands and pull out a can of Mortein, I could tell almost immediately it was going to be a difficult job. Apart from the smaller, yet ever present kitchen population, there were splinter populations in all rooms of the house. The spray repelled the cockroaches to the hinges of bedroom cupboards, clock radios, book shelves, dining room tables, etc, and as the spray wore off, these splinter groups would send recruits back into the kitchen to recolonise. So instead of having a focused problem in the kitchen, there was one there as well as throughout the house.

The proposed Bill is about to hold the can of Mortein to flying-foxes. We will invite flying-fox haters to go on their own campaign of dispersal, splintering camps all over the place, causing much more grief than the original problem and in the meantime increase stress levels in the flying-fox, which has been shown to increase the disease prevalence. There are numerous examples throughout the east coast of Australia where the dispersal of one camp has resulted in two or more camps in situations of equal or increased impact on residents. So, more flying-fox, with more disease, in more locations. A reason for more flying-fox hatred, and so the cycle will go on and on against this threatened group of Australian wildlife, that are so important for forest regeneration and persistence.

The only solutions are education and selective professional management. The public must be shown the true story of flying-fox, their importance and why they only pose a significant risk in a handful of situations. We must keep the option to disperse a camp as a precious commodity, only to be employed where a clear and objective risk assessment deems the risk too great to have the camp remain. This cannot be open to political pressures, but based on transparent and objective criteria and coordinated at national, state and regional levels. Local decisions without population scale context will inevitably lead to overuse of the dispersal option and the cascade of negative consequence.

I am happy to meet with any delegate of the State Government to discuss further.

Yours Sincerely



Phil Shaw
Managing Director