



Speech by

Hon. Lindy Nelson-Carr

MEMBER FOR MUNDINGBURRA

Hansard Wednesday, 18 April 2007

MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Dingoes, Fraser Island

Hon. LH NELSON-CARR (Mundingburra—ALP) (Minister for Environment and Multiculturalism) (10.12 am): Late yesterday I was saddened to hear that a young girl was bitten by a dingo on Fraser Island. Fortunately, the girl sustained injuries that were able to be treated by ambulance officers at Eurong.

In response to this incident, the Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service will be increasing patrols around the area in an attempt to identify the suspect animal. The animal has been identified and it will be trapped and humanely destroyed.

Dingoes are usually known to approach humans only when seeking food. Therefore, aggressive behaviour is often attributed to the illegal practice of feeding these animals. The current breeding season has also seen dingoes displaying higher levels of aggressive behaviour. The QPWS has a comprehensive Fraser Island dingo management strategy in place which strongly advocates against anyone feeding the animals.

Public safety remains the number one priority of the QPWS in relation to dingo management and QPWS rangers manage human/dingo interactions according to that strategy. The communication elements of this strategy have been independently assessed as world's best practice and have been very successful in reducing the risk to public safety whilst at the same time ensuring a sustainable population of wild dingoes on the island.

A wide range of management methods are used by the QPWS on the island to reduce the risks to humans from dingoes in line with the strategy. These include monitoring dingoes, public education, infrastructure deterrents including fencing, and enforcement of regulations related to feeding or deliberately making food available for dingoes.

Quarterly risk assessments have determined there has been a marked reduction in the level of risk across the island. But let me say that anyone caught deliberately feeding a dingo or making food available is issued with an on-the-spot infringement notice which carries a \$225 fine or \$3,000 if it goes to court. My thoughts are with the little girl and her family and I have asked the department to keep me fully informed on this matter.