




Speech By
Hon. Leanne Linard

MEMBER FOR NUDGE

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MINISTERIAL STATEMENT

Crocodile Management; Flying Fox Management

 **Hon. LM LINARD** (Nudgee—ALP) (Minister for the Environment and the Great Barrier Reef, Minister for Science and Minister for Multicultural Affairs) (9.58 am): The Palaszczuk government's number one priority is community safety, and we are committed to educating the community about crocodile safety. Our government's Crocodile Management Program is based on promoting safe behaviour by people when they are in crocodile habitat. Unfortunately, in recent times there has been one fatal crocodile attack and several non-fatal crocodile attacks in croc country.

This year's state budget includes increased funding of \$4.1 million over three years to further enhance and support crocodile management and Crocwise initiatives. This funding is in addition to an ongoing commitment of \$3.25 million annually. Extra funding will support crocodile detection and deterrence research and product development, implementation of a new Crocwise strategy, including enhanced Be Crocwise public safety campaigns based on advice from communication and human behaviour experts, increased collaboration with First Nations communities, and further partnering with local governments and the tourism sector.

Following a recommendation by an independent expert committee, the department is also reviewing the Queensland Crocodile Management Plan. The department has been engaging with key stakeholders such as Indigenous ranger groups, local governments, conservation groups, key industry sector groups and Surf Life Saving Queensland. In addition to the amendments to the Queensland Crocodile Management Plan the department is in the final stages of developing a new Crocwise strategy that will guide delivery of the Be Crocwise program over the next five years.

Public safety education under the Crocwise strategy is vital to influencing people to behave safely while in croc country. The message is clear: if you are in croc country, reduce your risk of a croc attack by staying at least five metres from the water's edge, keeping pets on a lead and away from the water's edge, avoiding the use of small watercraft such as kayaks and paddleboards, and staying well away from crocodile traps.

I would also like to briefly update the House on the management of flying foxes in Queensland. Flying foxes are the largest flying mammals in the world and they are mobile and highly social animals, often gathering together in the daytime in large groups, or roosts. Flying foxes play a vital role in the ecology of native plants and ecosystems as long-range pollinators and seed dispersers. The government recognises the need for flying foxes to be managed in a way that addresses both community expectations regarding the need to protect local amenity and the need for the long-term conservation of these species in the wild.

To assist in the management of flying foxes, this year's budget extends the Flying-Fox Roost Management—Local Government Grants Program with an additional \$500,000 per year for the next three years. The grants program is helping to enhance the capacity of local governments to deal with high conflict urban flying fox roosts and to develop and implement comprehensive, long-term roost management plans based on coexistence with humans.

The Palaszczuk government will continue to make the investments needed to keep our community safe while at the same time protecting our natural environment and the species that call it home.