

NICK DAMETTO
Member for Hinchinbrook



MEDIA RELEASE

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Contractor to help fight against Ingham bats

AN environmental management firm with a proven track record of bat roost dispersal will get to work in Ingham shortly following a productive meeting with Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto and Hinchinbrook Mayor Ramon Jayo.

Mr Dametto said he was pleased Cr Jayo had announced a \$250,000 contract to environmental management firm Biodiversity Australia to disperse and relocate the town's flying fox colony.

"After introducing Hinchinbrook Shire Mayor Jayo to Biodiversity Australia operations manager and senior ecologist Karl Robertson two weeks ago, we now have been able to take an important step forward in solving our flying fox problem in Ingham," he said.

"I'd like to thank council for being proactive in the awarding of this contract and it is my hope that dispersal activities start as soon as possible. Our town has been held hostage by these vile, disease-infested creatures for too long."

Mr Dametto said the State Government should chip in to help council with the cost of the contract, given that the bats were directly impacting State-owned infrastructure in the area.

"We have two schools and a hospital which have been under siege by the bats. Ingham State School had to undertake extensive tree trimming and sanitisation of all paths, playground equipment, shade sails and infrastructure before school started on Tuesday.

"Last Thursday, the emergency helicopter was unable to land at the hospital because of the bats. Both situations were unacceptable. The Minister for Education, the Minister for Health and Ambulance Services and the Minister for Environment and Science have a responsibility to the people of Hinchinbrook to protect the state-owned assets in this town and provide a safe environment for our community to live.

"After years of lobbying the State Labor Government, I believe it is despicable that we have reached this situation where ratepayers will foot the bill for this dispersal. That's why I will continue to fight for funding to be allocated by the State to assist council in their efforts to disperse the established flying fox roost. The government has a role to play in the long-term solution here."

Mr Dametto said he would be writing to Education Minister Grace Grace, Health Minister Steven Miles and Environment Minister Leanne Enoch to request further funding to assist council with their dispersal efforts.

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Photo captions

Hinchinbrook MP Nick Dametto, Hinchinbrook Mayor Ramon Jayo and Biodiversity Australia Operations Manager & Senior Ecologist Karl Robertson inspect a flying fox roost at the back of the Ingham Botanical Gardens earlier this month.

A little red flying fox at the back of the Ingham Botanical Gardens.

Media Enquiries

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