



**Rob Stokes MP**  
**Minister for the Environment**  
**Minister for Heritage**  
**Minister for the Central Coast**  
Assistant Minister for Planning

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## **MEDIA RELEASE**

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Monday 3 November 2014

### **NEW FLYING FOX MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Environment Minister Rob Stokes today announced a new strategy to minimise the impacts of flying-fox camps surrounding populated areas.

Mr Stokes said human health must always be our first priority and this plan will empower councils to resolve issues within their communities and take appropriate local action at the earliest opportunity.

“Active management is needed where flying-fox camps are close to urban settlements, causing noise, odour and potentially putting health at risk,” Mr Stokes said.

Flying-foxes remain protected and under the new policy land managers will be able to get a five year license to:

- Create buffer zones by removing vegetation to create a separation from populated areas and to disturb animals at the boundary of the camp to encourage roosting away from human settlement;
- Carry out camp disturbance or dispersal by clearing of vegetation or dispersal of animals by noise, water, smoke or light; and
- Undertake camp management such as removal of trees that pose a health and safety risk, weed removal (including removal of noxious weeds), trimming of understorey vegetation and the planting of vegetation.

“The policy encourages councils to prepare camp management plans for sites where there is a high level of impact on the community.

“The Office of Environment and Heritage will provide ongoing support to land managers and communities, including a suite of online resources and advice for preparing camp management plans; and local contacts to assist councils.

Mr Stokes also announced the finalisation of ‘special circumstances’ that will allow orchardists to continue to be able to apply for shooting licenses in rural areas.

“While the orchard industry is moving towards netting as a long term solution, we recognise that in the short term, shooting licences will be needed in some circumstances to manage crop damage.

“Licences will continue to be available for existing orchardists who need to use shooting to manage flying-fox issues in rural areas for five years.

“More than \$4 million is also being made available orchardists who want to use netting as an alternative to shooting.”

NSW Health advises that the public should avoid direct contact with flying-foxes as there is always the possibility of being scratched or bitten and it leading to infection.

Anyone who encounters an injured bat should contact the local Wildlife Information Rescue & Education Service (WIRES) network on 1300 094 737 or visit their website.

The Flying-fox Management Policy is now on public exhibition and can be viewed at:  
<http://www.environment.nsw.gov.au/threatenedspecies/flyingfoxcamppol.htm>