



The Hon. Tony Burke MP

Minister for Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Mrs Julia Irwin MP  
Chair  
Standing Committee on Petitions  
PO Box 6021  
Parliament House  
CANBERRA ACT 2600

20 JAN 2010

Dear Mrs Irwin

Thank you for your letter of 25 November 2009 about a petition lodged with your committee to protect Queensland fruit orchards from flying foxes.

I am responding as the Australian Government minister responsible for matters concerning agricultural industries. I understand that the Hon. Peter Garrett AM MP, Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts, who has a legislative responsibility for the protection of threatened native species, will respond separately.

The government supports management of flying fox populations. The government is reviewing the policy statement in the *Environment Protection and Biodiversity Conservation Act 1999* for the grey-headed flying fox to ensure that it reflects the current knowledge of the potential effects of actions such as culling and relocating colonies.

While flying foxes are protected under both Commonwealth and state legislation, the petition raises issues—namely the impact of flying foxes on agricultural production and strategies to protect them—that are state responsibilities.

I have sent a copy of this letter to the Minister for the Environment, Heritage and the Arts.

Thank you for bringing the concerns raised by the petition's signatories to my attention. I trust this information is of assistance.

Yours sincerely

Tony Burke