Date

To The Triage Team

Compliance@environment.gov.au

cc to;

Threatened Species Commissioner

Dr Sally Box

sally.box@environment.gov.au

Ref MCU20/0006 - Development Application for a Material Change of Use for Air

Services (Aviation Facility) on land described as Lot 3 on RP732964, situated at
2224 Tully/Mission Beach Road, Mission Beach Q 4852

To the Triage Team,

We are aware the community has brought the development (MCU20/0006) to your departments attention, but to date the development has not been referred to be assessed under the EPBC Act.

We have no doubt this development is likely to have a significant impact on matters of National Environmental Significance.

The southern cassowary (Casuarius casuarius johnsoni) is considered the main threatened species that is potentially impacted by the proposed heliport development.

A medium lift helipad is sited 20 metres from a mapped primary cassowary corridor, associated with a waterway, connecting the Wet Tropics and Great Barrier Reef World Heritage areas. The corridor is recommended  to be expanded to 100 metres.  (See Map 1., Biotropica 2008). Lot 3 RP732964 and R214 are also mapped as cassowary corridors in the Commonwealth’s EPBC Cassowary Habitat and Cassowary Corridors (DEWHA 2009) (Statutory).

The development site flight path is directly over a high biodiversity coastal wetland including critically endangered Littoral rainforest

A key issue is the potential effect of noise pollution from the proposed helicopter flight path directly beneath/adjacent to that path.

Helicopters from the proposed facility will overfly  an area of Crown reserve habitat likely to support around five cassowaries on a permanent basis.

The loud noise of Helicopters may result in cassowaries avoiding essential habitat, place cassowaries at a higher risk of roadkill resulting from birds taking fright.

There have been no reports of the impacts to local cassowary populations  from such noise/vibration.

No EPBC Self-assessment has been completed. This would be expected, as a minimum, before proceeding any further with the assessment process.

The effect of the proposed facility on local cassowary movement and persistence has not been considered within the Planning Report (Gilvear 2020), or the Cassowary Coast Regional Council Planning report.

 I request your department advise the proponent of their responsibility to refer any development that is likely to have a significant impact on a matter of National Environmental Significance.

Could you please acknowledge receipt of this letter.

Yours Sincerely

Name

contact