



28 May 2015

To Hon Mark Bailey MP, Minister for Main Roads  
via email

[mainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:mainroads@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

cc [brett.e.martin@tmr.qld.gov.au](mailto:brett.e.martin@tmr.qld.gov.au)

### **Re cassowary deaths from road strike**

Dear Minister,

Mission Beach Cassowaries Inc (MBC) is a community group established with a particular interest in collecting information to raise awareness of how we can help cassowaries survive and thrive in their natural environment at Mission Beach. Our [facebook page](#) was established as a forum to discuss and record cassowary photos and stories while identifying individual birds to gain a better understanding of the threats they encounter on a daily basis.

MBC is a member of the Cassowary Recovery Team which meets every three months with relevant stakeholders to discuss the implementation of the Cassowary Recovery Plan. In the past, representatives from your department have attended the meetings which has given us an insight into the difficulties and possibilities of road management solutions to mitigate cassowary deaths.

The number of deaths by road strike, the biggest threat to cassowaries after habitat loss and fragmentation, continues to be recorded at an unacceptable rate at Mission Beach and the broader Cassowary Coast region. The toll has already exceeded well over the annual average only half way through this year. Since the media articles (see links at the end of this letter) highlighting the need for urgent action, there has been at least one more death and a road strike injury requiring intervention. There are constant reports of near misses and many incidences go unreported.

The cassowary is listed as endangered by both state and federal governments. It is a major tourist drawcard to Mission Beach and the community is proud to live in a place that has exceptional natural environment and wildlife. Mission Beach is known as the best place to see a cassowary in the wild. Recent surveys conducted by the local visitor information centre showed that 100% of visitors would like to see a cassowary during their stay. Visitors are impressed by the Main Roads signs as they approach Mission Beach, believing we are a community that cares. The local community continually demonstrates by example, a strong will to help the cassowary survive at Mission Beach. (see photos below).

We appreciate your department's willingness and actions in the past to erect signage and trial different traffic calming measures at Mission Beach. The trials have been helpful but are proving to have limited success in reducing cassowary deaths.

The comprehensive [JCU traffic management report](#) was written in 2011 as a requirement for the approval of a development (one of many) because of the increase of traffic it would bring. The report identifies road hotspots where cassowaries are at risk and makes recommendations for each. Despite constant appeals to your department, to date there has been no action resulting from the report.

Terrain NRM is coordinating a workshop, inviting all stakeholders, groups and individuals involved in cassowary conservation including the Cassowary Recovery Team, to discuss proactive ways to urgently address the continuing carnage of this endangered species and valued tourism asset.

The aim of the workshop is to gain a commitment from those attending to find solutions that can be applied region wide. We believe there are practical solutions that would not necessarily be very expensive but will require Main Roads advice and approval. There is a will from the community to assist by contributing funds for this purpose.

MBC urges you to attend the workshop being called for by Terrain to help find *long term solutions* to address our above concerns.

Please do not hesitate to contact MBC for further information.

Regards



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Saturday Paper <https://www.thesaturdaypaper.com.au/news/environment/2015/05/02/threat-far-north-queensland-cassowaries-case-worry/14304888001825#.VWb5o2eJjoo>

7 News <https://au.news.yahoo.com/qld/a/27027903/cassowary-turf-war-puts-endangered-birds-in-harms-way/>

ABC North Qld <http://www.abc.net.au/news/2015-04-09/locals-try-to-protect-cassowaries-at-mission-beach-in-north-qld/6379632>

ACF media <http://www.acfonline.org.au/news-media/news-features/ending-cassowary-slaughter-queensland-roads>

Brisbane Times <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/ending-the-cassowary-slaughter-on-queensland-roads-20150405-1meibi.html>

The guardian <http://www.theguardian.com/environment/2015/apr/03/cassowary-death-toll-from-cars-and-dogs-prompts-calls-for-urgent-protection>

Qld Country Life <http://www.queenslandcountrylife.com.au/news/agriculture/general/opinion/cassowary-numbers-take-a-hit/2728632.aspx>

Brisbane Times <http://www.brisbanetimes.com.au/queensland/cassowarys-bloody-end-must-spark-reforms-20150309-13z4gm.html>

Mt Isa North West Star <http://www.northweststar.com.au/story/2936667/hot-spot-review-after-fresh-cassowary-death/>



Roadside signs designed by Mission Beach school kids placed when there is an expected increase of traffic on Mission Beach roads.



Artists impression of possible signs combined with Vehicle Activated speed signs that could be placed at known cassowary road death hotspots