



Hon Dr Steven Miles MP  
Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and  
Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef

Our Ref: CTS 3828/17  
Your Ref: Petitions 2676-16 and 2698-17

1 William Street Brisbane Qld 4000  
GPO Box 2454 Brisbane  
Queensland 4001 Australia  
Telephone +61 7 3719 7330  
Email [environment@ministerial.qld.gov.au](mailto:environment@ministerial.qld.gov.au)

16 MAR 2017

Mr Neil Laurie  
The Clerk of the Parliament  
Parliament House  
George Street  
BRISBANE QLD 4000

Dear Mr Laurie

Thank you for your letter of 22 February 2017 enclosing copies of e-Petition No. 2676-16 and Paper Petition No. 2698-17 (the Petitions) received by the House on 14 February 2017 concerning the operation of a commercial barge service between Redcliffe and Moreton Island.

The Petitions state that *'the preferred respondent to an Invitation for an Expression of Interest to operate a barge between Redcliffe and Moreton Island has not entered into an agreement to establish and operate such a service'*. The petitioners *'request the House to call upon the Queensland Government to issue a new Expression of Interest to identify an operator who will promptly establish and provide a reliable vehicular and passenger barge service between the Redcliffe Peninsula and Moreton Island'*.

The Department of National Parks, Sport and Racing (the department) is responsible for the management of the Moreton Island Recreation Area under the *Recreation Areas Management Act 2006*. In July 2014, the former government invited Expressions of Interest (EOIs) from commercial operators who wished to provide a quality, regular and reliable barge service between the Redcliffe Peninsula and the barge landing areas at Bulwer and The Wrecks, being sites within the Moreton Island Recreation Area.

The EOI process assumed that the successful proponent would be responsible for meeting all other requirements in providing the service, including securing a vessel and access to a barge landing site on the mainland, noting the department only has jurisdiction to authorise the activities in respect of the Moreton Island landing site.

In October 2014, the department announced that the opportunity was awarded to Marine Diesel Traders Maritime (MDT). To date, as noted in the Petitions, the department has not entered into an agreement with MDT to authorise a commercial barge service, because MDT has been unable to secure a barge landing site on the mainland. It was initially anticipated that the service would run from Scarborough. However, upon investigation by MDT, it was determined that the cost of the development necessary at that location was prohibitive.

The department has no binding agreement with MDT for the service and considering the amount of time that has been provided for MDT to establish the service, I have instructed the department to advise MDT that should it be unable to establish a service by 30 April 2017 then the department will consider alternative options for the service.

I have also requested that discussions continue between the Department of Transport and Main Roads, the Moreton Bay Regional Council and the department to identify options for a suitable barge landing site on the mainland.

I would be pleased if you would arrange for the tabling of this letter in response to the Petitions in accordance with Standing Order 31 by 16 March 2017.

I hope this information has been of assistance to you.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'S. Miles', with a stylized flourish at the end.

**DR STEVEN MILES MP**

**Minister for Environment and Heritage Protection and  
Minister for National Parks and the Great Barrier Reef**