



## **MEDIA RELEASE**

### **New Raptor Rehabilitation Program officially opened today**

9/2/2017

Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary and TasNetworks have today opened the Raptor Rehabilitation Program at Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary. The Raptor Rehabilitation Program is the result of a partnership between TasNetworks and Bonorong Wildlife Sanctuary to address gaps in the specialist care of injured birds of prey in Tasmania.

Through the partnership, TasNetworks funded two Tasmanian-based vets to travel to Healesville Sanctuary in Victoria, to receive specialist veterinary training in the advanced medical care of large birds.

The partnership also includes the construction of three specifically designed temporary holding aviaries suitable for injured and recovering birds of prey.

Bonorong Wildlife Park Director, Greg Irons, said: "While some areas of raptor care are fairly well established in Tasmania, there is very little expertise and experience in a number of aspects of veterinary care, which has proven to be an issue for the successful rehabilitation of injured birds of prey in the past".

"The skills and knowledge learned by the vets trained under the program will undoubtedly lead to better assessment and quality of care for the raptors treated by these vets, and ultimately a higher success rate for releases back in to the wild. Over time these vets can also share their knowledge with other experts, so they too can improve their skills."

Each year, a small but nonetheless significant number of Tasmanian Wedge-tailed Eagles, Grey Goshawks and White-bellied Sea Eagles are killed or injured as result of flying into live power lines or perching on power poles.

TasNetworks Principal Environment and Sustainably Advisor, Ed Parker, said: "As a business, we recognise the unfortunate impact our network can have on threatened birds of prey. We see partnerships as an important part of our strategy to minimise our impact on threatened birds of prey and a way for us to make a meaningful contribution to the ongoing conservation of Tasmania's precious wildlife".

At the event, TasNetworks also announced a new partnership to support the research of University of Tasmania PhD candidate James Pay, which will include monitoring eagle movements using GPS transmitters. The aim of the research is to clarify the behavioural ecology of the endangered Tasmanian Wedge-tailed Eagle and use this information to help improve management actions.

Mr Parker said: "Our aim is to materially reduce our impact on threatened birds of prey in the most strategic and targeted way. Supporting research is a key part of this and we are excited to have the opportunity to contribute to this important research".