

Appendix C: Chuditch mis-identification correspondence

14 November 2024

Attention: Gemma Blick
Focus Minerals Limited
Level 5, 8 St Georges Terrace
Perth WA 6000

RE: Coolgardie Gold Project Biological Survey - 360 Environmental 2021

Dear Gemma

360 Environmental Pty Ltd (now SLR Consulting Australia (SLR)) was commissioned by Focus Minerals Limited (FML) to undertake a biological survey to support the environmental approval process for an expansion of FML's Coolgardie operations in 2021. During this survey, 360 personnel observed what they considered to potentially be a Chuditch (*Dasyurus geoffroyi*) scat. We understand that, based on the report's finding, the Department of Energy, Mines, Industry Regulation and Safety (DEMIRS) imposed conditions related to the Chuditch.

SLR notes that at the time the 360 Environmental report was written, the Species Profile and Threats Database indicated that the species or species habitat may occur within the survey area. This combined with the scat informed the conclusions made in the report. We note that scat identification cannot be definitive without genetic testing. Such testing would have provided clarity regarding whether the scat was from a Chuditch. Unfortunately, genetic testing was outside the scope of our works and the scat has not been retained and thus cannot be tested now.

In response to your query SLR reviewed the 2021 360 Environmental report findings, including the information on the scat in question, and considered the most up-to-date distribution maps from Strahan's Mammals of Australia (Baker & Gynther, 2023). As noted above scat identification cannot be definitive without genetic testing and the distribution maps indicate that the survey area is outside the currently known distribution of the Chuditch. SLR therefore considers that, on the balance of probabilities, Chuditch does not occur within the survey area and we therefore believe that the approval conditions related to the Chuditch have little basis and would serve no useful purpose.

Regards,

SLR Consulting Australia

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Evan Webb'.

Evan Webb
Associate Zoologist
ewebb@slrconsulting.com

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Michael Lohr'.

Dr Michael Lohr
Principal Zoologist
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