

2021 AGM PRESIDENTS REPORT

WOW. The last two years have slid by very quickly. Two extremely challenging years with drought, followed by bushfires, then COVID-19 and lately the northern NSW floods. All have presented challenges for your Executive.

With hindsight we may have done some small things differently, but I believe we got the majority right. The apiary industry received good support from the government during the drought and during and after the bushfires. Flood support has also been available to our industry. With COVID-19 making crossing state borders a constantly changing beast, during almond pollination NSWAA members were given accurate advice on border crossing requirements almost daily through E Bees.

A thank you to AHBIC that made sure that Federal bushfire funding wording was such that beekeepers would be eligible. Often with relief packages beekeepers are overlooked.

COVID-19 did limit the executive moving some issues forward as meeting with government ministers and departments was impossible for over six months. Unfortunately, we have not progressed our relationship with Forestry NSW.

Despite all the challenges we have moved forward. The Apiary Sites on Public Land document was updated. We recently held a workshop on updating the business plan. What was obvious from the workshop was that NSWAA needs to do a lot better with communicating to members. I accept the blame for that. We have our Biosecurity book developed and published.

The single desk has progressed – while not perfect yet – it is a lot easier to see what sites are vacant.

We have a new website designer and manager. This has been frustrating – while it is better than what the last designer had done, it is still short of what the Association expects.

Covid-19 forced the cancellation of the 2020 Honeyland and Conference. The Executive made the decision to not have Honeyland this year as the Royal Easter Show gate numbers would be restricted. Sydney Branch had a small presence in Honeyland's place. These cancellations have had a negative impact on our finances, however we are still in a sound financial position.

The Executive were able to secure a \$1.94 million grant under the Bushfire Industry Recovery Initiative. I hope to remain as the conduit for this complex project between the researchers and industry. I am sure that there will be substantial benefits for the industry from this project.

A BIG thank you to the Executive for their guidance, assistance, and knowledge for the past 12 months. Thank you also to Vikki Bingley and Robyn Lewis for being patient with me when I have been late with my reports. NSWAA is well supported by a lot of beekeepers and their partners but a special thank you to Debbie Porter and Therese Kershaw for their time and effort towards Honeyland and the Trade show, respectively.

I have enjoyed my time as President despite the challenges. I am stepping down as president and from the Executive but will continue to support the industry and NSWAA into the future.