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*"The voice of the Beekeeper"*

Volume 2 Number 3

May - June 2009



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# AUSTRALIA'S HONEYBEE NEWS

*The Journal of the NSW Apiarists' Association Inc. (NSWAA)*

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**COVER PHOTO** Woolworths 'beekeeper' promoting honey in their *Fresh Food* commercial

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# PRESIDENT'S REPORT



## Season

Winter conditions are now upon us with many New South Wales beekeepers migrating large distances to maintain hives. Most Southern beekeepers have hives on Spotted Gum on the South Coast with some Central and even a few Northern beekeepers travelling to the area. Many others have shifted hives into Central Queensland for Spotted Gum and Iron Bark. Production since Christmas has been very low for most producers.

Prospects for the next few months are quite limited (other than the aforementioned Spotted Gum) with very limited bud on White Box, winter flowering Iron Bark. Ground flora, given sufficient rainfall, will be eagerly sought after during spring.

## Honey Prices

Prices for honey have risen due to World shortages and domestic shortages. Some packers are offering up to \$3.85 for bottling grade honey. Some direct exporters have reported \$4.00-\$4.50. Prices should remain firm for the next few months.

## 2009 Conference

Arrangements for our Conference are in place with a great line up of speakers including three overseas guest speakers. The venue, Rydges Parramatta, is offering an exceptionally good rate and is very accessible no matter where you are coming from.

We have not increased the registration fee in order to make the Conference affordable for all and it includes a buffet lunch on both days. A Pre-registration form is included in this edition. Please remember to register before Conference - you will receive a discount and it helps with administration.

RIRDC are holding a Honeybee Research Field Day at Hawkesbury Agricultural College, Richmond, on Wednesday 8 July, prior to Conference. On Saturday 11 July the Sydney Metropolitan Branch will host the National Field Day at Hawkesbury Showground. Don't miss these two events.

## State Executive

Anyone interested in sitting on the State Executive, this is your time, as the new Executive is elected at Annual Conference. I encourage members to support a delegate or put your hand up for nomination at this year's Conference - help contribute to our industry's future.

## FCAAA & AHBIC AGMs - 11/12 July 2009

Both FCAAA and AHBIC will hold their AGMs at Rydges Parramatta following the NSWAA Conference.

You are welcome to attend these meetings as an observer however registration is necessary - a form is available from the AHBIC office - Ph: 02 9221 0911 or email [ahbic@honeybee.org.au](mailto:ahbic@honeybee.org.au)

## AHBIC Review

An abridged version of the AHBIC Internal Review Report, including 35 recommendations, is published in this edition (page 31). As Chairman of the Review Committee I urge all beekeepers to try and get your head around the recommendations, so you can vote at the NSWAA Conference, to achieve the resultant Industry body you require.

The Honeybee Industry has to decide whether they want the packers heavily involved in their peak body or whether the peak body (AHBIC) should be a production controlled body.

We have seen in recent times large quantities of honey being imported, which is not produced under the Quality Assurance process domestic production is expected to meet. We have a representative of the HPMAA stating that imported honey is an advantage to Australian beekeepers because of the profit that can be made. We have seen many periods over the past 2-3 years where domestic prices were suppressed and higher prices paid for imported honey.

I don't think Australian beekeepers should be supporting Argentinian beekeepers at our cost.

If you are not happy with the circumstances Industry has endured the past few years then change must occur. Part of the change should be the restructure of AHBIC to pursue a fair go for the Australian producer.

**Bill Weiss**  
**State President**

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# MESSAGE OF THANKS TO SHOW VOLUNTEERS

I would like to thank the following volunteers and donors for their time and help at this year's Sydney Royal Easter Show.

Many thanks to Australian Rainforest Honey, Beechworth Honey, Capilano Honey, Leabrook Farms Honey and R Stephens (Tasmania) for supporting the Association with their donations towards the Honey Promotional Bags. Also, thank you to the Bingley Family for all their donated time to pack honey. Thank you also to Bryn Jones and Kieren Sunderland for donating and packing honey.

Thank you to the Northern Tablelands Branch for lending us their honey tasters to use at the Show. Also to Capilano for lending us another three honey tasters. With five honey tasters going we were able to have all honeys tasting every day throughout the Show. They once again proved to be a huge success. With beekeepers manning the tasters at all times, it allowed the public to not only taste a great Australian product but to ask questions about how bees make honey. This is a great way to promote and educate the public.

The success of 'Honeyland' is owed to all those mentioned in this article. We had a good show this year but it wouldn't happen without all our volunteers and donations.

Aidan Kelly  
Bill Weiss  
Bruce Blunden  
Carl Cooper  
Cate Burton  
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David Bingley  
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Monte Klingner  
Neil Bingley  
Noelene Benfield  
Reg Marsh  
Robert Seagrave  
Sam Bingley  
Shona Blair  
Terry Parnell  
Tom Bingley  
Wayne Hammond

Once again thank you to all for your time, we couldn't do it without you.

Cheers Julie

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We have negotiated a very competitive rate of \$140 a night. Rydges has also block booked 30 rooms opposite at the Waldorf Ph: 02 8837 8000 (these are one bedroom serviced apartments). There is free parking at Rydges.

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### CONFERENCE PRE-REGISTRATION

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# Group Sounds Alarm on European Bee Industry

27 April 2009

BRUSSELS (Reuters) — Europe's beekeeping industry could be wiped out in less than a decade as bees fall victim to disease, insecticides and intensive farming, the international beekeeping body Apimondia said on Monday.

"With this level of mortality, European beekeepers can only survive another 8 to 10 years," Gilles Ratia, the president of Apimondia, told Reuters.

"We have had big problems in southwest France for many years," he said, but the problem had extended to Italy and Germany.

Last year, about 30 percent of Europe's 13.6 million hives died, according to Apimondia figures. Losses reached 50 percent in Slovenia and as high as 80 percent in southwest Germany. About 35 percent of European food crops rely on bees to pollinate them, Mr. Ratia said, and the deaths pose a big threat for farmers.

"It is a complete crisis," said Francesco Panella, who tends about 1,000 hives in the Piedmont region of Italy. "Last year, I lost about half my production. I can't survive more than two or three more years like this."

Mystery has surrounded the recent decline in the bee population. Most keepers blame modern farming methods and the pesticides used on crops like sunflower and rapeseed.

French honey output has suffered in intensive sunflower-farming areas, said Henri Clement, president of the French beekeeping union, but has remained steady in mountains and chestnut forests.

Apimondia's scientific coordinator, Gerard Arnold, cites two main factors responsible for weakening bee colonies: insecticides and the parasitic mite Varroa. Once weakened, Mr. Arnold said, the hives were then wiped out by other diseases.

The European Union voted this year to phase out the most toxic pesticides after years of wrangling, but beekeepers still say that they are ignored by politicians. "If cattle were producing 30 percent less milk each year, it would not be acceptable," said Josef Stich, who keeps 200 hives near Vienna.

## BEE MITE DISCOVERY IN PAPUA NEW GUINEA

ABC National Rural News - 09/06/2009

Scientists in Papua New Guinea have discovered a mutant bee mite which could devastate the Australian beekeeping industry. A formerly harmless species of varroa mite which lives on Asian honeybees has undergone a genetic mutation allowing it to infest European honeybees, wiping out up to half the Papuan honey industry. It's a very rare phenomena, and believed to be confined to a single female mite and her offspring. Dr Denis Anderson, a bee pathologist with the CSIRO says that, based on past experiences, the mites will be also carrying exotic viral diseases.

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# THAT'S MY OPINION

By Greg Roberts



## Almond Pollination

We are all aware by now of the financial demise of Timbercorp, the largest owner of almond trees in Australia. Timbercorp Limited has gone into voluntary administration. Their trees are managed by Select Harvest who have trees of their own and I believe they have shown interest in buying Timbercorp's trees. However it is Timbercorp's assets in water licences that may hold the future to long term large scale almond production. By now beekeepers should have received their almond pollination expression of interest form from their pollination broker. Trevor Monson, over the years, has put a lot of work into helping to develop the Almond industry and no doubt he will continue to work hard for the future survival of that industry. I believe that beekeepers should fill in their expression of interest forms; this would give pollination brokers the support they need and would also show Timbercorp's administrators and Select Harvest they have the support of the beekeeping industry. The expression of interest is not a binding contract and if beekeepers are uncomfortable then they can back out at any time.

In the past Managed Investment Schemes (MIS) have received criticism because some are based on investments not the market place. It seems to me that it may be the hardwood plantations that could have been the monkey on the back of some MIS companies. It is some of their agricultural investments that have been the most viable.

## Sustaining Native Forest Operations Performance Audit

Timbercorp is not the only company that has fallen on hard times. Great Southern Timber Plantations is also in the hands of receivers. The NSW Auditor-General's Office have released a report on the performance of Forests NSW management of Native Forests and Plantations (Hardwoods). Native forest operations ran at a loss of \$14.4 Million in 2007/08. Forests NSW is a public trading enterprise managed within the NSW Department of Primary Industry. Its role is to manage timber supply in a long term sustainable manner; it also has the responsibility to manage beekeeping sites and some recreation areas. The NSW Auditor-General's Office has just released a performance report on sustaining native forest operations. Forests NSW manage the supply of hardwood to meet wood supply agreements and sustain native forests.

To me the audit seems to show that to meet wood supply commitments the native forests on the north coast are being cut at a faster rate than they are growing back. It may not be long in my opinion before this could be the situation on the south coast. It may have a direct effect on the sustainability of the beekeeping industry. The question could be asked – have the Regional Forest Agreements and the Brigalow Assessments delivered a sustainable outcome for the future of the timber industry and local rural communities and maybe a detrimental effect on the beekeeping industry? From 1997 to 2005

there have been 935,000 hectares of Forests NSW estate converted to National Parks and other reserves. Without access to these lands beekeeping may not survive and this would break an important link in the chain of this State's food security.

## Chinese Honey

With some United States (US) imports of Chinese honey found to be in breach of the US anti-dumping laws, Australia now seems to be one of the new targets for cheap Chinese honey imports. There has been a considerable amount of this honey entering through our borders. Our local market has always been a sacred cow and must be protected at all cost. There are some honey packers who recognise this and market 100% Australian honey on our local shelves (it's what our consumers want), these people deserve our respect. However there are others who may be ready to dance to the Monty Python tune "I like Chinese" and start a local price war using this cheap honey, this can only have one effect and that is to drive down the price of local honey. If this is the case, these people who have no respect for the long term sustainability of our industry, have got to be described as weak as camel spit on a wet day.

The US Food and Drug Administration (FDA) have discovered shipments of Chinese honey imports into the US was labelled as *Chinese Apple Juice Concentrate*, these imports were also discovered to have lead contamination. In 2002 the European Union banned Chinese honey because of chloramphenicol contamination (this drug is banned in Australia). Much of the contaminated honey went through an ultra filtration system was blended and re-branded for world markets including Australia. There have been ten drugs identified as prohibited in food being used in China. Despite the Chinese Government's attempts to ban the use of these drugs it has been reported in a US newspaper that in some remote regions of China beekeepers continue to use some of these banned drugs. The newspaper also reported that a Chinese businessman, in his attempts to impose some food safety standards on Chinese honey production, rented a portion of an Acacia tree nature reserve and allowed beekeepers to place their hives in the reserve provided they did not use any banned drugs and did not put their honey into containers that may cause lead contamination. He was later ambushed and found beaten!

With Chinese honey now coming into Australia for the use of local consumers, it is the behaviour of some of these Chinese beekeepers that may have a major affect on our local market. It is a pity that Australia does not have the same anti-dumping laws as the US. We have the best Quality Assurance programmes in the World, but we are fast becoming the hardest country in the World to export honey from and the easiest to import into. I wonder if we are giving in too quickly to bureaucratic red tape.



Twelve months ago NSWAA was the driving force behind an industry crisis meeting. One of the direct results of that day was that Woolworths Supermarkets agreed to include honey in their *Fresh Food* promotion. Since then commercials have appeared on both free to air and pay television. Honey promotion of this type has been sadly missing in recent years but it just shows if industry tries hard enough with the right programmes, it can achieve some good results. We should be thankful to Woolworths.

Sadly we are again in a crisis situation - we cannot allow cheap imported honey destroy our local market. All State, Territory and Federal health and agricultural Ministers and Shadow Ministers need to know the potential health risk with cheap imported Chinese honey that may be contaminated, you can also add some of the Greens to that list. Major retailers and industrial users of honey should also be warned. I believe that cheap imported products are the biggest threat to the sustainability of our industry. The possibility of the importation of contaminated honey is a human health issue therefore a biosecurity problem, industry's responsibilities go beyond an underfunded border control. At the moment there is some local testing of honey being done by the National Residue Survey (NRS). However I am raising the question do we need an industry run testing programme outside the NRS to keep Government agencies on their toes and importers honest? As I've heard a rumour (I hope is wrong) that there has been a local honey buyer caught blending Chinese honey with Australian honey and rebranding it as Australian, this was within the local industrial market. If this industry testing programme cannot be done through the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, and let's face it Honey Packers and Marketers may not want it, then maybe the NSWAA could look at a State based industry service fee. Make no mistake we have a lot to worry about with cheap imports and so does our consumer.

*Greg Roberts is a third generation beekeeper, former NSW and National President and former National Chairman*

## ASIAN HONEY BEES

Queensland has advised of the detection of a new nest of *Apis cerana* on 5 June 2009. The detection was in a house in the suburb of Mooroolboul.

The nest has been destroyed but not yet extracted so further interpretation of linkages to the recent detections is not yet possible.

Asian honey bees are coming off second-best in Biosecurity Queensland's all out assault, which has seen the destruction of two nests and two swarms in one week. This brings the total number of infestations destroyed to 28 since the first nest was detected two years ago.

Asian honeybees were first discovered in Queensland in May 2007 at Portsmith, Cairns, by a local beekeeper called to remove a nest of nuisance bees.

Biosecurity Queensland Coordinator Charlotte Greer said the quick detections were a credit to both the Asian honey bee response team and vigilant members of the public.



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# SEASONAL OUTLOOK

## NEW SOUTH WALES

### Southern NSW

Spotted Gum has been yielding quite well, producing extremely light coloured honey for this species. Inclement weather over the last two weeks has slowed production considerably, but colony strength seems to be holding. Weather permitting flowering should continue through to end of August. Good rains have fallen over much of the southern inland and if it continues through spring, Canola and Salvation Jane should provide a reasonable crop. Red Stringybark has a reasonable budding for next autumn.

*Neil Bingley*

### North Coast

Tea tree flowering was unusual this year. It started late, and there were some trees out most of the time, rather than the bursts of flowering that normally occur. There have been very few fine days during the flowering, making it pretty much a non event.

Red Gum is starting to flower, as is Grey Ironbark on the lower country. Where these are together they may prove useful if the rain ever stops. White Mahogany is showing some bud for the spring. Some beekeepers have moved well into Queensland for the Spotted Gum.

At the time of writing some hives have been lost in the flood. The number might increase when the country dries out enough for beekeepers to get around their sites at risk.

### Central Tablelands and Slopes

Eucalyptus budding is poor, the May rains have allowed farmers to plant Canola and there is a very good germination of Paterson Curse and Blueweed. These two Echium species should, with spring rains, benefit spring and summer honey production with both very useful pollen plants. Blueweed is later flowering, and Paterson Curse could provide useful for late summer autumn production.

### Sydney Basin

Plenty of rain should ensure plenty of pollen for spring from ground plants and wattles.

*Bruce White*

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## QUEENSLAND

### South East Coastal

Exceptionally good rains have occurred in SE QLD during autumn with falls of 300mm in 24 hours in some areas. Good soil moisture will assist early spring build – Grey Iron Bark being a good prospect.

### Darling Downs

Prospects for a winter and spring crop seem to be fairly limited at this stage.

### Wide Bay Burnett

Large numbers of hives have been moved onto Spotted Gum with bees breeding well and a small surplus of honey. Narrow Leafed Iron Bark has patchy bud and Grey Iron Bark will be a prospect.

### Central

With the good rains received in late summer, the expected good budding on Narrow Leafed Iron Bark did not eventuate.

### Channel Country

As I write this, parts of the Chanel Country have received very good rains with a major flood warning on the Paroo River. Yapunyah has reasonable bud, so I would expect bees to be moving out there as soon as the country dries out.

Overall prospects for Queensland for winter will be below average. *Roy Barnes*

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Doug Somerville

Technical Specialist, Honeybees - NSW Department of Primary Industries - Goulburn



## VARROA MITES

### INTRODUCTION

Varroa mites are the most serious pest of honey bees worldwide. Varroa infects honey bees in every major beekeeping area of the world, except Australia. Although there is a combined government and industry effort to keep them out of Australia, it is generally accepted that it is inevitable that varroa mites will eventually establish in Australia. This will radically change beekeeping practices.

Varroa mites include a group of species, including *Varroa destructor* and *Varroa jacobsoni*. It was believed, up until recently, that only *Varroa destructor* posed a threat to managing honey bees.

For the purposes of this Primefact, honey bees refers to *Apis mellifera* (European honey bee). Varroa have evolved with *Apis cerana* (Asian honey bees). The impact of varroa on Asian honey bees is not lethal. The varroa mites normally breed on Asian honey bee drone brood with minimal impact on the Asian honey bee colony.

Dr Denis Anderson (CSIRO, Canberra) discovered that some varroa were reproducing on honey bees, while other varroa were not. He was able to identify specific varroa that could breed on honey bees and these were named by him as *Varroa destructor*. This cross species infestation of *Varroa destructor* on honey bees probably started around 50 years ago. This mite is now widespread throughout Europe, North America and New Zealand. *Varroa jacobsoni* is a mite infesting Asian bees throughout Papua New Guinea and Indonesia. Until recently, the areas to the north of Australia were not seen as high risk for the introduction of *Varroa* mites. Unfortunately, there is now evidence that suggests *Varroa jacobsoni* is reproducing on honey bees. Thus, any varroa incursion into Australia has the potential to create major management problems for beekeepers.

### IMPORTANCE

Why are these mites such a big deal? Essentially, left untreated in a honey bee colony, they will kill it. All feral and untreated bee colonies will eventually die. This necessitates very careful management from a beekeeper's perspective to detect and treat mites as and when their population increases to critical levels. There is a significant cost in materials and labour involved in varroa management. There is also the likelihood of the chemicals used for such purposes leaving residues of one form or another in the beeswax and honey.

The most significant impact will be the death of all untreated honey bee colonies from across the landscape. This will seriously reduce the positive impact of honey bees in the environment of pollinating a range of horticultural, broad acre crop and pastoral plants. The value of honey bees as pollinators is considered to be extremely important and, in some reports, without honey bees the range of food products will dramatically diminish.

### DESCRIPTION

So what do they look like? Unfortunately, when mites are in low numbers in a colony they are very difficult to detect. They look like small brown sesame seeds with legs – eight legs to be exact. They are flat and about 1.1 mm long and 1.7 mm across. When not hiding, they are easily identifiable to the naked eye.

### LIFE CYCLE

Varroa can only reproduce on bee brood. No brood equals no mite breeding. Mites find drone honey bee brood significantly more attractive to breed in than worker brood. Approximately 4 out of 5 mites will enter drone brood if given a choice.

The female mite enters the brood cell of an advanced larvae just before the cell is capped by nurse bees. The mite sinks itself into the larval food at the bottom of the cell and emerges once the brood cell is fully capped. She will then move onto the developing bee larvae/pupae and feed on the haemolymph (bees blood). The mother mite may lay up to six eggs at intervals of about 30 hours. The first egg develops into a male mite and the rest are female.

Mite development from egg to adult takes about 8–10 days. The first mite (male) mates with the female mites as they mature. On average, 1.5 daughter mites emerge from a worker cell and 2.5 daughter mites emerge from a drone cell along with the mother mite. The male and undeveloped female mites die inside the cell.

The mother mite and her daughters are then capable of crawling back into adjoining brood cells to complete the reproduction life cycle again. Once the population of mites has increased substantially, it is possible for several mites to be in the one brood cell.

There can be 24–30 breeding cycles for the mites in a year. It is believed that female mites will breed up to three times. Thus, as long as honey bee brood is present, the mites will breed and their numbers will increase exponentially. If drone brood is present, then the mite population will increase even faster.

### SIGNS/SYMPTOMS

Unfortunately mites are very good at concealing themselves on adult honey bees. It is generally agreed that to observe adult mites on adult honey bees is very difficult and totally unreliable as a diagnostic tool.

In spring and summer when breeding conditions are ideal most colonies rear large numbers of drones. Occasionally drone brood comb is built between the top bars of combs and the queen excluder. When inspecting a colony and removing the queen excluder, developing brood pupae and larvae can be exposed. The presence of mites feeding on the drone brood is very obvious, as the brown sesame seed-sized mite feeding on the white drone pupae is very distinct.





*Figure 1: Drone brood infested with a varroa mite*

Other than this accidental discovery, if you are not purposely monitoring for mites, the colony is likely to collapse before you are aware of the presence of mites. A colony can appear to be populous with healthy looking brood one week and be all but extinct the following week. In this case the brood pattern is irregular and may look similar to that observed with brood diseases. However, a sample of “infected” larvae sent to the laboratory for diagnosis is unlikely to be positive for European foulbrood or American foulbrood. This condition has been termed Parasitic Mite Syndrome, or PMS.

### MONITORING

The most effective way to determine if mites are present or if their population is reaching a critical level is to place miticide strips in a colony and insert a sticky mat on the bottom board. The sticky mat should have a wire screen or protection over it to prevent the house bees from cleaning up any fallen mites and to stop the bees getting stuck.



*Figure 2: Varroa mites attached to a sticky mat*

The miticide treatments should be in the hive for up to two weeks to maximise the opportunity to detect the presence of very low numbers of mites. Currently miticides are only registered for use in official surveillance hives strategically located across Australia.

Rolling of bees in icing sugar is an effective means of determining mite populations in a colony. A sample of 200–300 adult bees are removed from the brood area and placed in a jar with a tablespoon of icing sugar. The bees and icing sugar are rolled around for a few minutes, then allowed to settle down. A screen is inserted in the lid and the icing sugar (plus mites) are shaken out of the jar onto a white piece of paper. Although this is an excellent non-lethal (to bees) method of monitoring mite population densities, you are only measuring the number of mites that are on the sample of bees tested. You will not detect mites in the brood cells with this method.



*Figure 3:  
200-300 bees into a jar*



*Figure 4: Add a tablespoon of icing sugar and roll bees around for two minutes*



*Figure 5:  
Shake icing sugar and mites onto a white sheet of paper*

### HOW THEY SPREAD

Adult mites are quite capable of living for more than five days without the presence of honey bees. Thus, they can be moved around on used beekeeping equipment including extracted combs.

Drone bees drift from hive to hive and even between apiaries. They are certainly able to move varroa mites around. Foraging worker bees will come in contact with other bees when visiting blossom for nectar and pollen. Mites are very agile and quick in moving and can transfer between bees in passing.

Thus, mites have several means by which they can disperse across the countryside. A colony that is heavily infested and collapses will be robbed (of its honey stores) by other bees from nearby colonies. The varroa will quickly infest these robber bees which will very effectively spread the mites.

### WHAT DO YOU DO?

- Be vigilant – keep an eye out for the unusual.
- Become familiar with what varroa looks like.
- Practice a barrier system that restricts the interchanging of equipment.
- Keep good records – where have your bees been, how long for, movement of supers, etc.
- If you notice anything unusual, take a sample and record the details and -
- Contact the Emergency Disease Hotline on 1800 675 888 – 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Michael Hornitzky (Microbiologist NSW DPI), Nick Annand (Apiary officer NSW DPI) and Rob Manning (Research officer WA Agriculture) for reviewing this Primefact.



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8 lamb drumsticks  
50ml olive oil  
2 large onions finely chopped  
3 cloves garlic, finely chopped  
1 teaspoon ground ginger  
Salt  
1-1½ litres water  
1½ kg butternut pumpkin  
**150g honey**  
100ml oil  
1 teaspoon cinnamon  
Toasted sesame seeds

Heat oil in a large saucepan and brown the lamb on all sides. Add onions, garlic, ginger, salt and enough water to just cover with a lid and simmer for about 1-1½ hours. The lamb should be very soft. Meanwhile peel pumpkin, cut into cubes and steam until cooked through. Heat oil in a large frying pan, add pumpkin and mash with a fork. Add honey and continue mashing and stirring with a wooden spoon until pumpkin is caramelised and thicker and darker in colour. Stir in cinnamon. When lamb is ready, remove from saucepan. Boil to reduce liquid by half. Taste and add salt if necessary. Arrange pumpkin on a large platter in a circle. Place lamb and sauce in centre. Sprinkle with toasted sesame seeds to serve.

## Ginger Crunch slice

2½ cups plain flour, sifted  
1 cup caster sugar  
2 teaspoons ground ginger  
1 teaspoon baking powder  
250g cold butter, chopped

### Ginger Icing

150g butter  
**¼ cup dark honey**  
1½ tablespoons ground ginger  
1½ cups icing sugar, sifted

Preheat oven to 180°C. Place the flour, castor sugar, ginger and baking powder in the bowl of a food processor and pulse to combine. Add the butter and blend until the mixture resembles fine breadcrumbs. Press into a 20cm x 30cm tin lined with non-stick baking paper. (The mixture will be crumbly when pressed into the tin but will bond as it cooks). Bake for 35-40 minutes or until golden and firm to touch. To make the icing, place the butter, honey and ginger in a saucepan over medium heat and cook for 2-3 minutes or until the butter is melted. Stir through icing sugar and pour immediately over the slice. Refrigerate for 1 hour or until the icing is set. Slice to serve.

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**WEDNESDAY 8 JULY 2009**

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Campus, University of Western Sydney

- |                |   |
|----------------|---|
| <b>9.30am</b>  | Tea and coffee on arrival   |
| <b>9.50am</b>  | Welcome and introduction (David Dall)   |
| <b>10.00am</b> | Colony Collapse Disorder (Denis Anderson - CSIRO)   |
| <b>10.30am</b> | Demonstration – stingless bees, native bees and honeybees —UWS Apiary   |
| <b>11.30am</b> | Incidence and prevalence of <i>Nosema ceranae</i> in Australia (Michael Hornitzky - NSW DPI)  |
| <b>12.00pm</b> | <i>The value-added potential of pre-biotic components of Australian honeys</i> (Patricia Conway UNSW)                                   |
| <b>12.30pm</b> | <i>Evaluation of anti-Varroa boards for increase in honey production</i> (Robert Spooner-Hart University of Western Sydney)             |
| <b>1.00pm</b>  | Lunch   |
| <b>1.30pm</b>  | 'Pollination Blues': world premiere with an introduction by the Director, Mr Stefan Moore   |
| <b>2.30pm</b>  | Small Hive Beetle (Garry Levot & Nicholas Annand of NSW DPI, and Diana Leemon of Qld DPI)   |
| <b>3.30pm</b>  | Questions to Committee and researchers on present and future research issues (Des Cannon - Chair RIRDC Honeybee R&D Advisory Committee) |
| <b>4.00pm</b>  | Implications for Australia of Varroa in PNG (presenter - TBA)   |
| <b>4.30pm</b>  | DVD - Africanised Bees (Denis Anderson - CSIRO)   |
| <b>5.15pm</b>  | Close   |

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Seats on the bus may be reserved by telephoning Lea Edwards on (02) 6271 4132, or by emailing [lea.edwards@rirdc.gov.au](mailto:lea.edwards@rirdc.gov.au). Priority will be given to overseas and interstate delegates, and after 5.00pm Thursday 2nd July, available places will be allocated to NSW delegates who have placed their names with Lea on the Waiting List.

Those who are staying at or close to Rydges Rosehill can, if they wish, catch a train from Clyde Station (about 800m from Rydges) to East Richmond Station (with a change at Granville). Catching the train at Clyde at 8:35am will get you to East Richmond at about 9:45am.

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## Preliminary Conference program Thursday, 9 July 2009

8.00am	Registration
9.00am	Call to order - Bill Weiss Welcome, apologies and remembrance pause Confirmation of 2008 conference minutes Business arising from the minutes Financial statements/show report - Julie Lockhart <i>Australia's Honeybee News</i> - Margaret Blunden Branch reports – as published President's report (BICC and show reports) Resource report – as published
9.30am	FCAAA report - Bill Weiss
10.00am	AHBIC report - Lindsay Bourke
<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>
11.00am	The Good the Bad and the Ugly - Heather Clay The Canadian Honey Council
11.30am	HBRDC Report - Des Cannon
12.00pm	NSW Department of Primary Industries report - Dr Doug Somerville Research & Advisory - Mick Rankmore Regulation
12.30pm	Nominations for Executive Council
<b>12.45pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
2.00pm	US honey market opportunities - Hans Boedeker
2.30pm	The age of the entrepreneur - Greg Mills
3.00pm	Honey bee genetics and bee breeding - Peter Oxley
3.30pm	Inventions and ideas from the creative minds of beekeepers - Heather Clay
4.00pm	General business
<b>5.00pm</b>	<b>Close</b>

## Preliminary Conference program Friday, 10 July 2009

8.30am	Registration
9.00am	Varroa surveillance in NZ a success - Paul Bolger
9.30am	Update on Varroa mites - Dr Denis Anderson
<b>10.00am</b>	<b>Official opening</b>
<b>10.30am</b>	<b>Morning tea</b>
11.00am	Updated AUSVET plan - David Wilson
11.30am	AFB in NZ Government out - Industry in - Paul Bolger
12.00am	Update on Nosema - Dr Michael Hornitzky
<b>12.30pm</b>	<b>Lunch</b>
	Close of poll for Executive
1.30pm	Hybrid canola pollination - a hard days night - Heather Clay
2.00pm	Hybrid canola in Australia - Justin Kudnig
2.30pm	Reporting bee deaths - David Thompson
3.00pm	Where to now? – medical use of honey - Dr Shona Blair
3.30pm	General business
<b>4.30pm</b>	<b>Close</b>

## ANNUAL CONFERENCE DINNER

*Rydges, Parramatta*

*Friday, 10 July 2009*

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# FCAAA REPORT - MAY 2009

The past year has again brought interrupted production with droughts (Queensland, South Australia, parts of New South Wales) and flooding rains (Queensland, Northern New South Wales).

Victoria has suffered horrendous bushfires which have destroyed many thousands of hectares of forest resources. The heat wave which promoted the bushfires damaged many hundreds of hives in Southern New South Wales, Victoria and South Australia. Some conditions and even honey flows were cut short by the extreme heat wave (up to 48 degrees C) with most hives losing their field force and stressing brood. Some hives were burnt, but at this stage I have not received numbers, but I believe some hundreds of hives were lost.

## **Imported Honey:**

The past year has seen substantial imports of honey: 1,000 tonnes from China, 1,684 tonnes from Argentina, 120 tonnes from Europe.

It is concerning to the beekeepers of Australia, that this honey may contain residues of hive treatments and exotic diseases (*Nosema Ceranae*, AFB). It is hard to imagine that Quality Assurance and traceback could be achieved on this imported honey, as Australian beekeepers are being expected to demonstrate.

## **Export Enquiries:**

Over the past few months a number of overseas packers have expressed interest in purchasing honey from Australian beekeepers or co-operatives of beekeepers. This may demonstrate the shortage of honey Worldwide and may even demonstrate the buyers' reluctance to deal with Australian packers.

## **Pollination:**

Many crop growers are expressing concern that their crops will require managed honeybees due to shortage of natural and feral pollinators. Lack of pollination has not been experienced before by these growers.

Beekeepers have had numerous enquiries for bees for pollination from growers who have not used managed honeybees previously.

Hives required for Almond pollination is growing yearly with some 82,000 hives required for the major grower, plus many more hives required for the other growers. The number of hives required as trees mature is expected to reach 250,000 - 300,000 hives in the next few years.

Apple, Pear and Stone Fruit growers are becoming very aware that they must have managed honeybees to adequately pollinate their orchards to achieve maximum yield and fruit quality.

## **Queen Bee & Package Exports:**

Efforts are being made to try to satisfy Japan's requirements for Queen Bees. They require freedom from *Nosemaecosis*.

Canada has ceased imports of packages from the Eastern States of Australia. Western Australia has begun exports of packages to Canada due to their Small Hive Beetle freedom.

Packages and Queens to USA are under threat from some operators in America who are lobbying America's government to cease imports from Australia. Part of their argument is the *Apis Ceranae* incursion in Far North Queensland.

It is essential both for the Australian honeybee Industry within Australia and for exports that this incursion be eliminated.

## **Pests – Disease:**

The Small Hive Beetle is continuing to cause increasing damage to hives in New South Wales Coastal and nearby Tablelands and much of South East Queensland. The enclosed traps developed by Garry Levot are looking closer to release with work being done between APVMA and RIRDC.

## *Nosema Ceranae:*

A survey is being carried out by Michael Hornitzky for RIRDC on the prevalence and spread of *Nosema Ceranae*. This pathogen may prove to be a very serious threat to honeybees in future years.

## *AFB:*

AFB is causing some States to change the way AFB control is managed. South Australia Industry is providing funding for a part time inspector. That is, Industry is taking a role in managing AFB. The New South Wales State Executive is looking at a range of measures including Industry involvement at management level.

## **AHBIC Review:**

The Review Committee has finalized its report and will be handing down the recommendations to AHBIC. These are to be published to allow beekeepers time to consider their views prior to the round of State Conferences where the issue of the future structure of AHBIC will be voted on.

The present structure of AHBIC does not seem to be able to attract enough funding for it to operate with a voluntary funding mechanism.

A proposal of a hive levy to replace the existing levies on production should be considered as a more equitable way to fund research, testing and Biosecurity Animal Health levies.

## **AQBBG:**

The Queen Bee breeding group has met, and on advice from Peter Oxley, has decided to have open mated queens for assessment and only AI 5 queens of each line to be held for propagation. This will allow for adequate assessment without the loss of large numbers of valuable AI queens during assessment.

## **Bill Weiss - President**

# Special Apiary Operation at Batemans Bay, NSW

## - Department of Primary Industries

*Mick Rankmore, NSW DPI Gunnedah, Ph: 02 6741 8374*

### **A special apiary operation was conducted in the Batemans Bay area.**

The operation involved an open meeting with beekeepers on the Monday afternoon and site inspections during Tuesday to Thursday of that week. The results of the operation are explained below.

### **The key issues that came out of the meeting on the Monday night were;**

Beekeepers are concerned about Small Hive Beetle and the effects it has on their hives, however they were keen to find out more about American Foulbrood (AFB). It is the beekeepers responsibility for inspecting their own hives and taking action when a problem is detected. Assistance may be provided by NSW DPI by way of information on how to manage disease/pests in their hives - , NSW DPI web site, field days, meetings etc. NSW DPI is keen to obtain information from the industry about abandoned, neglected and/or diseased hives so we can use our resources to the best advantage for the industry. A beekeeper's hives can get AFB but it is what the beekeeper does about it that makes the difference.

### **How many people attended the meeting?**

23 beekeepers attended - commercial, part-time and hobbyist's beekeepers. This was a reasonably good turn out and it indicated that there is interest from the beekeepers to find out more information.

### **How many apiary sites were inspected during the week and what was detected?**

We inspected 46 sites, 39 of these sites had beehives at those sites. This represented 21 beekeepers. A total of 1,144 hives were located at these sites. We inspected 241 hives. 52 hives were depopulated by the owners and the inspectors disposed of them at the local waste transfer station – the material was buried. The owners are having other hive material irradiated at their own cost. An additional 24 hives infected with AFB were burnt and buried by the owner.

Two unregistered beekeepers were detected and they were issued with a written caution for keeping bees while unregistered. Application forms and a Primefact on Registration requirements were provide to these beekeepers.

One beekeeper failed to notify AFB and was issued with a Penalty Infringement Notice of \$550.00.

Five beekeepers failed to correctly identify all the brood boxes. They were issued with a Written Caution, a written Direction to identify the brood boxes and a Primefact of identification requirements. .

### **What diseases were found and what were the percentages?**

Several notifiable diseases of bees were found, including American foulbrood, Chalkbrood, European foulbrood and Small Hive beetle.

We were concentrating on American foulbrood and the other diseases/pests were not necessarily recorded as a percentage. American foulbrood is the disease of most concern to the industry and NSW DPI. Four of the 21 beekeepers had American foulbrood. I.e. 19% of the beekeepers had AFB in their hives.

### **What risk is there of these diseases spreading if beekeepers don't comply with regulations or if a beekeeper neglects their apiaries or doesn't do anything about a disease they have in their apiary?**

If beekeepers don't comply with the regulations, particularly in relation to inspecting their beehives and controlling disease, then the risk of spread of disease is increased. There is a possibility that a serious outbreak of disease could be spread to other bee hives resulting in additional cost to industry in the future.

American foulbrood is one of the most serious brood diseases of honeybees. Infected hive material (honey, wax, deadout hives etc) can be a source of infection for decades if it is left out and exposed to bees. Bees in flight range of infected material are potentially at risk of infection if the bees take honey or other hive material from that infected material. They take back the infection to their own hives and eventually the hive will die out from the AFB. If there is a good honey flow bees will not normally rob other hives. However, once the flow slows down or stops then the bees will look around for other food sources - if AFB infected material is available then they will rob that material and therefore the AFB is spread around.

For beekeepers this means a cost to them in loss of production, loss of bees and hive material, replacement costs, time spent on inspections and possible costs for irradiation of hive material. The only way to get rid of the AFB is to depopulate the hives and burn or bury the dead bees and hive material or depopulate the hives, burn or bury the dead bees and irradiate the hive material.



**What are the statistics from this investigation like compared to other areas such investigations have occurred across the state?**

This is the 3rd operation. The first had 75% compliance. The 2nd had 43% compliance. This operation had 62% compliance. These results are disappointing and we hope that the operation will lead to an increase in compliance in this area, and a corresponding reduction in the threat of disease, particularly AFB.

**What does this investigation mean for the future of the industry?**

Beekeepers are responsible for inspecting their own hives and are required to notify AFB when they detect or suspect it in their hives. This operation has had an impact because some AFB disease is now eradicated from the local area. There may be other sources of AFB that NSW DPI doesn't know about. All beekeepers must be vigilant and inspect their own hives on a regular basis.

**Is this the first time such an investigation has been carried out in this area?**

This is the first time that this type of operation has been run in the area. Previously there have been various inspectors in the area undertaking disease inspections but not on this scale.

**Will there be another one, and if so, when?**

Other operations are planned for other parts of NSW. The next one mostly will be in the spring. For the Batemans Bay area our inspectors followed up on some of the beekeepers in early April.

Beekeeper category	Number of beekeepers	Beekeepers AFB
<50 hives	13	2
51 to 200 hives	1	2
> 201 hives	7	0

**Additional inspections conducted after the initial operation resulted in the following;**

Five apiary sites were visited representing 4 beekeepers. 51 hives were inspected. One beekeeper that had 32 hives infected with AFB (100% infection rate) had the hives burnt and buried. This beekeeper failed to notify AFB and a Penalty Infringement Notice of \$550.00 is recommended. One beekeeper was unregistered and a Written Caution was issued.

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# AHBIC NEWS

May 2009

## NOTICE OF INTENTION TO ALTER THE AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL CONSTITUTION

Notice is hereby given that the Annual General Meeting of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council will be held at Rydges Parramatta, 116 James Ruse Drive, Rosehill NSW on 12/13 July 2009. The meeting will commence at 1.30pm on Sunday 12 July and reconvene at 7.45am Monday 13 July 2009. In accordance with Section 19 of the Constitution it is the intention of the meeting to alter the AHBIC Constitution by special resolution.

### AGENDA AND NOTICE OF MEETING

1. Opening
2. Industry Reports
3. Chairman's Report
4. Confirmation of Previous Minutes
5. Financial Report
6. Consideration of AHBIC Review and Constitutional Changes  
In accordance with Section 19 of the AHBIC Constitution the meeting will consider the AHBIC internal review and consider the changes to the AHBIC Constitution. These proposed changes have been circularised to member bodies
7. Sector Reports
8. General Business
9. Election of Office Bearers
10. Meeting Close

*If you wish to register for the AHBIC Conference contact the AHBIC office to obtain a Registration Form*

## AHBIC INTERNAL REVIEW REPORT

**Presented by: The AHBIC Committee of Review for Peak Body Funding, Administration, and Organizational Structures**

*This abridged version of the report has been prepared for general circulation. It has been condensed from the original report of 56 pages. A copy of the full report is available from the AHBIC office.*

As chairman of the committee appointed by the July 2008 Annual General Meeting of the AHBIC it gives me pleasure to submit to you the committee's report of its investigation into the peak body voluntary funding crisis, including the framing of recommendations for consideration by members.

Forty-two (42) submissions representative of all states were sufficiently diverse and robust for the review committee to identify several themes of common interest, and for the committee to confidently translate the evidence provided to a report and recommendations that as closely as possible represents the collective view of respondents.

Yours faithfully

W Weiss - Chairman - AHBIC Funding Review Committee

## AHBIC REVIEW 2009

Following the sudden collapse in AHBIC voluntary funding levy income in the first half of 2008, AHBIC sought approval from industry participants for a combination of possible future voluntary and statutory arrangements, and suggested some cost effective restructuring of the peak body.

Responding to the AHBIC initiative, the VAA Inc approved a discussion paper for tabling at both the AHBIC and FCAAA annual general meetings, which were held in Melbourne during 14 & 15 July 2008.

The discussion paper reprised the history of successful peak body funding by voluntary levy from 1979 to 1997-98, examined some of the reasons for decreasing levy compliance since 1998, and explored a number of options with potential to restore voluntary levy compliance, including adjustments to the peak body organizational structure.

FCAAA member states approved the paper as a basis for discussion by AHBIC delegates representing all sectors at the following AHBIC annual general meeting.

AHBIC delegates approved in the majority that a review committee be established for the purpose of seeking opinion from industry participants about how the funding issue may be successfully resolved, and whether any structural changes are required to achieve that objective.

AHBIC delegates appointed the following persons to the committee:

- Mr W Weiss, chairman, FCAAA
- Mr S Fewster, immediate past chair, AHBIC
- Mr K Gell, immediate past AHBIC executive committee member
- Mr L Briggs, VAA executive member

The following terms of reference were drafted:

- i. What structural changes are necessary, if any, to help improve the function of the peak body?
- ii. What structural changes are necessary, if any, to help improve peak body voluntary levy collection?
- iii. What other options for peak body funding need to be investigated?
- iv. What administrative changes are necessary, if any, to improve communication and feedback from AHBIC sector member bodies – (honey production (FCAAA), crop pollination (NCPA), queen/package bee production (AQBBA), honey packers and marketers (HP & MAA)?
- v. The role of FCAAA (principal state beekeeping associations) in the structure and function of the peak body.

The committee called for submissions from Australian honeybee industry stakeholders, inviting submissions to be lodged by 30 November 2008. The committee extended this date subsequently to 31 December 2008, and extended the date for the lodgement of its findings and recommendations with the AHBIC to mid March 2009.

Forty-two submissions were received by the review committee, thirty-seven from practicing beekeepers or from beekeeping associations representing in total several hundreds of member apiarists. Submissions were received from all states. Two mainstream honey packers/marketers responded, as did a number of producer/packers.

Several areas of common interest emerged from the submissions analysis consistent with the published terms of reference. Some other opinions, while not representative of common themes, were of considerable value to the committee.

### **Communication**

A strong theme (70% of beekeeper submissions) expressed by respondents was that beekeepers, including potential levy payers, had lost confidence in the ability of the peak body to effectively provide for two way communication with the levy or potential levy payers of each sector. Many respondents feel alienated from the peak body decision-making processes. Some have a very limited understanding of the role and function of the apiculture industry's national peak body. The report's findings and recommendations deals with these issues.

### **Peak Body Funding**

The decline of the peak body voluntary funding system, giving rise to this committee review, raises issues that must be remedied if the needs of the nation's beekeepers are to be adequately represented, now and in the future, at the highest levels of government and other places by the industry's peak body.

The threat of *varroa destructor* and other exotic pests, lurking on Australia's doorstep, related bio security arrangements that require development and implementation, the outcome of the Federal Government Parliamentary Inquiry into the future development of the Australian beekeeping industry that also includes such matters as national policy development to assist access by beekeepers to Australian conserved forests, the importation and testing for chemical residues of large quantities of honey and its effect on farm gate prices, national beekeeping representation of the industry on the new alliance, Pollination Australia, the effect of agricultural chemicals on the fitness of honey bees, skilled migration, and many others, are all examples of what the industry's peak body now and in the future will be required to address in the interest of trying to secure and maintain prosperity for beekeepers. A poorly funded peak body cannot adequately represent its members.

68% of beekeeper respondents to this review, recognising the fragility and insecurity of voluntary funding, strongly support the development and implementation of a statutory hive levy of some kind to help fund the operations of the beekeeping industry's peak body. The review committee recognised that in seeking various approvals for the implementation of a national statutory hive levy of one form or another, the peak body would encounter many difficulties on the way.

### **Peak Body Restructure**

Review terms of reference address the following questions:

- what structural changes are necessary, if any, to help improve the function of the peak body?
- what structural changes are necessary, if any, to help improve peak body voluntary levy collection?

70% of beekeeper respondents supported the retention of the FCAAA, or its merging into the core structure of the peak body, similar to the discussion paper model tabled at the 2008 AHBIC annual general meeting.

65% of beekeeper respondents supported a contention that mainstream honey packers and marketers should not continue to perform a peak body executive function. However, 51% of respondents supported the inclusion of honey packers and marketers in a non executive capacity through membership of an advisory standing committee which would meet as required to examine issues of policy from time to time and to develop recommendations for consideration by the peak body executive committee and general council.



## **Other Issues**

In addition to the issues addressed by industry participants in the foregoing, a number of further observations and suggestions of value were made which are consistent with the review terms of reference.

Issues such as the restructuring of arrangements for AHBIC Annual General Meetings, new protocols for executive committee elections, the establishment of executive committee performance indicators, travel costs for delegates attending the Annual General Meetings, closer liaison of AHBIC with the National Farmers' Federation, and the future management of the FCAAA Contingency Fund, have all been addressed the review.

The review committee found that suggestions to remodel the AHBIC Annual General Meeting rules and format to have considerable merit, in the interest of encouraging wider participation by rank and file industry members in debate, and moving away from the traditional method of election for the AHBIC executive committee of management.

Suggestions were made that to do so by opening up the election of members from the floor of the annual general meeting would encourage competition for positions and the industry would benefit through the encouragement of the most competent people to represent production sectors at the peak body executive management level. It was also observed that change may also encourage members of a younger demographic to become interested in nominating for election.

The issue of merit, and how to measure the merit of persons making themselves available for election was discussed. The review committee feels the best that can be done in the AHBIC situation is, for the field of candidature to be widened as far as it is possible to do so within the rules of the organization, and allow sufficient time between the nomination and election processes for the electorate (principal state apiarists' associations), to form opinions.

The review has revealed that a majority of respondents believe that some remodelling of the peak body structure is necessary to provide closer linkages with its stakeholders, to provide for more efficient administration, communication and accountability to its members, and to remove impediments that stand in the way of engendering enthusiasm and greater funding support for the industry's national peak body.

The prospect of change in any walk of life inevitably brings with it apprehension in some quarters about alteration to the status quo. The challenge for the review committee has been to listen to what the members are collectively saying, to develop appropriately targeted recommendations for consideration which, if adopted and implemented may alter the status quo, but in such a way as to foster better understanding of, and support for the beekeeping industry's representative national organization and its efficiency of operation.

Structural reform and other measures as proposed in the following recommendations are designed to provide the foundation for the reestablishment of good will among all stakeholders, – producers, packers, marketers, producer packers, to cooperate once again in across the board funding arrangements in the common interest of mutual benefit, delivered through a smooth functioning, efficient national peak body.

### **Recommendation 1**

That all sector member body representation within the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc. organizational structure, as currently exists, be deleted from the structure.

### **Recommendation 2**

That the six principal state apiarists' associations constitute the core organizational structure of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc.

### **Recommendation 3**

That the production sectors of queen breeding and crop pollination be provided with appropriate pathways for core peak body representation through respective principal state apiarists' associations, including the opportunity for formal representation at meetings of the peak body general council. (Principal state apiarists' associations meeting in council.)

### **Recommendation 4**

The honey packing and marketing sector be provided the opportunity to be formally represented at meetings of the peak body general council.

### **Recommendation 5**

That a honey quality, packing, and marketing policy advisory standing committee be established, membership consisting as follows:

- Chairman, AHBIC
- Chairman, HP&MAA
- Chairman, B-QUAL
- Chairman, HBRDC
- Largest by volume honey packer

### **Recommendation 6**

That the function of the AHBIC honey quality, packing and marketing policy advisory standing committee be to receive references from the AHBIC executive committee of management for consideration and to recommend courses of action, in addition to the capacity to generate initiatives and recommendations for consideration by the AHBIC general council and executive committee.

### **Recommendation 7**

That the AHBIC executive committee of management be reduced in number to 5 members, including the chairman and deputy chairman, elected by the members of the AHBIC general council of delegates.

### **Recommendation 8**

That the AHBIC executive committee of management terms of appointment be for two years, elections staggered to provide for management continuity and flexibility.

### **Recommendation 9**

That consultation with the representative apiarists' associations of the Northern Territory and the Australian Capital Territory be engaged to discuss and resolve the Territories' accommodation within the peak body organizational structure.

### **Recommendation 10**

That each member state of the AHBIC establish pathways for consultation with any unaligned beekeeping entity which may reside in any state.

### **Recommendation 11**

That the AHBIC investigate, and report on, what structural changes, if any, would be required to facilitate a closer working relationship with the National Farmers' Federation Inc.

### **Recommendation 12**

That a constitutional review committee be established to remodel the existing AHBIC constitution to reflect organizational and operating changes agreed to by the member states in Council.

### **Recommendation 13**

The AHBIC constitutional review committee examine, and if relevant and appropriate, consider provisions of other similar entities' rules for possible adaptation for the AHBIC statutes. Examples follow:

- The Almond Board of Australia
- The Canadian Honey Council
- The National Beekeepers' Association of New Zealand
- The Federal Council of Australian Apiarists' Associations
- Australian Citrus Growers

### **Recommendation 14**

That each principal state apiarists' association be required to allocate the portfolios of honeybee crop pollination and queen bee production each to a designated serving executive council member and establish avenues for liaison with each sector.

### **Recommendation 15**

That the principal state apiarists' associations establish within each regular executive council meeting agenda standing orders, provision for discussion and resolution of AHBIC business generated from the respective state, or by the peak body executive committee of management.

### **Recommendation 16**

That the AHBIC executive director maintain an internal communications correspondence register, comprising:

- Principal state apiarists' associations elected council members, reviewed annually post state conference elections
- State departments of agriculture/primary industries apiculture personnel
- Mainstream honey packers/marketers/producer packers
- Pollination Australia
- Honey Bee Research and Development Committee members
- Key Federal Department of Agriculture and Fisheries personnel
- Others as may be appropriate

### **Recommendation 17**

That as an issue arises for consideration by the AHBIC generated externally, or internally by the executive committee of management, by a member state, or by the policy advisory standing committee, the executive director circulate the information to each of the member states including respective executive council personnel, and seek input from each of the member states as a prerequisite of consideration by the AHBIC executive committee of management. The relevant correspondence also be circulated to other parties listed on the register, for their information, subject to the discretion of the executive committee of management.

### **Recommendation 18**

That when sufficient lead time is not available for wider consultation, the executive committee of management have the power to resolve issues on behalf of the member states, subject to reporting of action taken and endorsement by the member states.

### **Recommendation 19**

That publication of the monthly AHBIC newsletter continue and be circulated to parties of the internal correspondence register. It is further recommended that each newsletter should include a Market Intelligence Section, reporting comprehensively on prevailing export and domestic market environments.

### **Recommendation 20**

That each principal state apiarists' association be requested to publish, in each issue of respective periodicals, peak body press releases and news items for the information of financial members.

### **Recommendation 21**

That each state apiarists' association member state's annual executive council meeting roster be lodged with the AHBIC office.

### **Recommendation 22**

That the outcome of all executive committee of management actions/deliberations be expeditiously reported to each principal state apiarists' association.

### **Recommendation 23**

That the principal state apiarists' associations, convening in general council and on taking professional advice, establish performance indicators applicable to executive committee personnel, segregated as follows:

- Executive Director – (linked to financial bonus)
- Chairman – (linked to financial bonus)
- Deputy Chairman and Executive Council Members

### **Recommendation 24**

That any honey bee industry participant, who is a financial member of a principal state apiarists' association, be eligible for nomination and election to the AHBIC executive committee of management, including the offices of chairman and vice chairman.

### **Recommendation 25**

That all nominations for the election of AHBIC executive committee of management members, including the chairman and vice chairman, be lodged with the executive director one month in advance of elections. (Note the provisions of recommendation 8 regarding staggered terms of appointment.)

### **Recommendation 26**

That all electoral voting to decide the successful candidates take place in session on the floor of the AHBIC Annual General Meeting, resolved by the council of delegates representing the principal state apiarists' associations of Australia.

### **Recommendation 27**

That all issues debated on the floor of the AHBIC Annual General Meeting be resolved by the council of delegates representing the principal state apiarists' associations of Australia.

### **Recommendation 28**

That any Australian honey bee industry participant who is not a member of the AHBIC general council of delegates, or a financial member of a principal state association be eligible to move, second, and debate motions, providing notice of motion to do so three months in advance is lodged with the AHBIC executive director.

### **Recommendation 29**

That any Australian honey bee industry participant be eligible to attend annual general meetings, and to participate in debate on any issue.

### **Recommendation 30**

That the principal state apiarists' associations in Council give consideration to the conduct of the AHBIC Annual General Meeting as a National Convention, to showcase the industry to the Federal and State Governments, to the stakeholders, and to the wider community.

### **Recommendation 31**

That the AHBIC chairman and executive director as a matter of priority, commence consultation with the Federal Government and if necessary the State Governments, to determine what opportunities may exist for the design and implementation of a statutory arrangement for the purpose of funding the operations of the Australian apiculture industry peak body, including the establishment of a hive levy.

### **Recommendation 32**

That in engaging consultation with the Federal Government, about peak body funding, AHBIC representatives have regard to but not be confined to, the following references:

- Recommendations No 15 and No 18 of the Federal Parliamentary Inquiry into the Future Development of the Australian Honey Bee Industry, later titled, "More than Honey, the Future of the Australian Honey Bee and Pollination Industries".
- This AHBIC review committee report, terms of reference, and recommendations.
- Prospects for the establishment of a national statutory arrangement based on a per hive levy rate.
- Prospects for liaison with respective State departments of agriculture/primary industries beekeeping hive registration offices, including the W.A. Beekeepers' Producers' Committee and the Agricultural Produce Commission Act of WA.
- Prospects for the integration of levy collection arrangements with existing Animal Health Australia honeybee industry bio security arrangements, and other statutory arrangements.
- Prospects offered by other Federal Government mechanisms, policies, and discretionary powers of Ministers.
- Australian beekeepers' mandate.

### **Recommendation 33**

In the event all approaches to the Federal and State Governments seeking the establishment of a statutory honey bee industry peak body funding arrangement do not succeed, or partly succeed and in the event the foregoing recommendations 1–3 become endorsed by the peak industry body meeting in Council, the principal state apiarists' associations again coordinate a strategic approach similar to that set out at 10.1 to 10.7 of the full report, with the objective to regain the goodwill and enthusiasm of all industry participants to re-establish a viable funding base for the peak body, based on voluntary contributions.

### **Recommendation 34**

That a copy of this report, with appreciation, be delivered to each person who took the time and effort to lodge a submission with the review committee. Further, that a copy of this report, in electronic or hard copy form, be delivered to every principal state apiarists' association executive council/committee member, for consideration.

### **Recommendation 35**

That an abridged copy of this report be delivered to the editor of each principal state apiarists' association official journal/newsletter for publication, and to all regional beekeeping associations, and to current voluntary levy payers.

### **Conclusion and Acknowledgements**

In the opinion of the review committee, the recommendations of this report, if adopted, should have the effect of bonding beekeepers at large with the industry national organizational structure and leadership in a much closer relationship than has been the case for some time. With the principal state apiarists' associations playing their part as core members of the peak body organizational structure, the opportunity will be there to demonstrate to their respective memberships that rank and file members are an important component of the fabric of the peak body, and through their representative member state, have a direct avenue of approach to the peak body on any matter. Better two way communication and accountability processes will help create a much more positive understanding of peak body function, rather than the negative connotations of misunderstanding.

The review committee sincerely thanks all 42 people who took the time and effort to provide a submission. Without your support, and the great diversity and value of your ideas and perceptions, this review outcome would not have been possible. Every submission had something of value to say, every submission was subject to detailed analysis in an effort to thoroughly understand what you were saying, why you held respective views, and in an effort by the committee to translate the evidence to a report and recommendations that as closely as possible represents the collective view of respondents.

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