



NSWAA CONFERENCE TAMWORTH 2021

**Adopting the Code reduces the risk of getting AFB
And makes you a more profitable beekeeper!**

Rod Bourke, NSW DPI Bee Biosecurity Officer



Bee ready for registration changes

They actually occurred on July 1st, 2020

A lot of varied communications
went out to all 10 000 NSW
beekeepers about the changes

But,

It seems a lot of
commercial operators
have not read any of it!

Does anybody have any questions?

See you at the bar later and we can cover them.

Thank you.

(That was Rod's shortest talk **EVER**)

BUT WAIT....

There's MORE!

I almost forgot to mention a few things...

- I have talked with a lot of beekeepers and one thing is very clear
- Most commercials have hardly lifted a finger to actually comply with the Code yet...
- Except for those that had to do it to go into Victoria for almonds.....
- That honeymoon grace period in NSW will be over soon and DPI Compliance will be enforcing the Code.

But why do I need to change the way I do my bee stuff (and comply with the Code)?

- We are only as strong as our weakest link
- As an industry we unfortunately still have many weak links...
- These less capable beekeepers need to improve on their beekeeping practices to reduce the AFB damage that they cause to others.
- The more operators that follow the Code the fewer problem beekeepers the rest of us will need to worry about (because Compliance will be worrying them).
- It is also a legal requirement in NSW to follow these conditions

The BBO is here to help beekeepers.

- **Rule # 1 is that I do not work in DPI Compliance!**
- I am here to assist beekeepers through training and education, not hit them with a big stick.
- I can assist beekeepers to better understand their obligations under the Code and to improve their general levels of bee biosecurity.
- **Keep remembering Rule # 1!!!**

I do things such as;

Honeybee Biosecurity 2-Day training courses through Tocal.

- 21 beekeepers, organised through the Tamworth Branch of NSWAA here late last year.
- 33 at Yanco in early May, organised through the Riverina branch.
- Working with North Coast on 2-3 courses now.
- If you want to run this training in your area then get in touch.

Biosecurity for Beekeepers BOLT course

- The BBO Programs around Australia contributed funds to enable this course to be free for all beekeepers (previously a token for 50+ and \$20 for recreational).
- The NSW BBO Program contributed the largest amount towards that.
- If you haven't done any Biosecurity training recently (within last 3 years) then get onto it at <https://beeaware.org.au/training/>
- **If you need a paper version then contact me.**

AFB management


- Is your AFB REALLY under control?
- Have you been using “powder” for “a while”?
- Eventually you will realise that it is not actually solving your AFB problem, because you keep on getting AFB?
- Its your own brew of AFB that you keep alive and well within your bee colonies by treating it ever so gently and kindly.
- This approach does not work! You need to do other things!
- When AFB raises its head you need to chop it off!

AFB management

- I can assist you to develop a management plan to weed out your diseased hives and get on top of your own internal AFB problem
- I won't judge you, I am here to HELP you (if you want help!).
- A clean operation makes more money!


AWE\$OME!







Honey Culture Test (HTC)

(minimum 115-125 g sample)



- Code stipulates that all beekeepers managing 50+ colonies of bees need to do a pooled HCT covering at least 20% of their hive numbers annually.
 - That's 50 colonies (anything with a queen), not 50 production hives! Some guys just cannot count, which is dangerous for others!
 - Hands up who has done it for the 20-21 financial year.
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Smart beekeepers

- Smart beekeepers do a HCT for EVERY load because they understand that it is a valuable tool which shows them which loads need additional work. It is worth the cost.
- Smart beekeepers actually use their OWN honey from their own loads to ensure they get relevant and invaluable information on their bee health to best MANAGE their bees.
- Anybody running multiple loads that only gets 1 HCT done is probably either a bit cheap and/or more interested in hiding something than actually finding it! That's not smart!

Smart beekeepers

- Only propagate new hives/nucs/packages from their CLEAN loads, because everybody knows you only ever use clean bees for that!
- They keep good records for trace-back, should AFB occur later.
- Any hive in a load that is not good enough to supply honey for the HCT gets clearly marked and has follow-up examinations.
- Accept that hives infected with AFB have lost their “value” and are actually a HUGE RISK to the bottom line (and reputation) if allowed to remain in existence.

Exotic mite surveillance

- Hands up who has done a sugar shake, alcohol wash or drone uncapping in one hive in EACH of your apiaries this spring and autumn to look for exotic mites....
- If you think you are “too busy” to do that now then see how you go with mites established in Australia!
- You will have no way of managing the number of hives per beekeeper that you do now!
- Prevention of mite establishment is far better than a cure (because there is none) or the various types of management required!

Yuk...



We don't



want varroa



Here!



I am the Varroa Monster!



Exotic mite surveillance

- Don't sit back expecting the recreational beekeepers to find them for you...everybody needs to pull their weight!



Commercials move bees all over the place and often place (or dump) right next to others and are the likely method of spreading exotic mites, so you need to be vigilant. Detected early they can be eradicated, but that will only happen if everybody is looking.

Appendix 1:

CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE

Date of your last successful completion of an approved Honey bee Pest and Disease Training Course or the Beekeeper Biosecurity Training and Assessment Program to comply with Section 9 of the **Code**? ____/____/____

Provider reference No.

RESULT

Dates over which all hives were inspected to comply with Sec. 3.1 of the **Code** ____/____/____ to ____/____/____
____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Dates over which all hives were inspected to comply with Sec. 3.2 of the **Code** ____/____/____ to ____/____/____

Tick the method(s) used for mite examination:

- ____/____/____ to ____/____/____
- ☐ Sugar shake
 - ☐ Alcohol wash
 - ☐ Drone uncapping

Date of your last independent honey test for *American foulbrood* to comply with Sec. 10 of the **Code**. ____/____/____

Testing laboratory

Laboratory reference number

RESULT

Positive/Negative

During the past 12 months I have maintained management standards that are fully compliant with the Australian Honeybee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice, including maintained accurate, legible, records of all biosecurity-related activities in accordance with Part B Section 5 of the Code.

Yes/No

I certify that the above information is true to the best of my knowledge

Name: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____



Appendix 1

Have you done everything?

Or ANYTHING?

You need to fill in this form annually, like a financial year (July 1-June 30)

If everybody followed the Code

- We would see far less of this





And this

And this.....



Prevention is better than cleaning up a mess, so get rid of your old Junk!





When the light shines through
= not bee proof!



Free feed if you want it!



ALMOST at retirement age,
but maybe not just yet!



Take home message

- Read the Code and try to understand that it is very important to all Australian beekeepers to manage good healthy bee colonies.
- Bee proof your extracting area!
- Don't let bees rob sticky supers!
- Do regular brood inspections
- Manage disease
- Manage weak colonies



THANK YOU AND ENJOY YOUR BEEKEEPING.

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