



AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL

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AUSTRALIAN HONEY INDUSTRY MONTHLY REVIEW

To: The Australian Honey Industry
From: Stephen Ware – Executive Director
Re: July 2009 Update

AB's Honey
Australian Honey Products
Beechworth Honey
Bees Neez Apiaries
Capilano Honey Limited
Dewar Apiaries
Honey DownUnder
H L & H M Hoskinson
I N & JE Mills
Pollination Association of WA

Saxonbee Enterprises
Spring Gully Foods Pty Ltd
Stephens, R
Tasmanian Crop Pollination Association
Tasmanian Honey Company
Walkabout Apiaries
T & M Weatherhead
Weerona Apiaries
Wescobee Limited

AHBIC acknowledges the **beekeeper suppliers** who contribute via their packer and queen bee supplier to AHBIC. We also urge beekeepers to support those packers/queen bee breeders who contribute to AHBIC.

**Does your honey buyer's or queen bee supplier's name appear on this list?
If not, then ask 'why not?'**

SUPPORT THOSE WHO SUPPORT YOUR INDUSTRY!

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NOTICE OF MEETING

Reconvened Annual General Meeting – 12 October 2009

1. Notice is hereby given that the a re-convened meeting of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc is to be held on **Monday 12 October 2009** commencing at 11:00am.
2. The meeting is to be held at Quality Hotel, Melbourne Airport, 265 Mickleham Road, Tullamarine Victoria.
3. Enclosed are the papers for the above meeting. Should members wish to raise any additional matters please do not hesitate to contact me.
4. The proposed changes to the Constitution incorporate the Resolutions. In addition Capilano Beekeepers' Limited has also been included as the resolution on this motion at the AGM had been carried.
5. Prior to the meeting under separate cover, your Chairman has indicated that he will be writing to Capilano Honey and the Honey Packers and Marketers seeking their support for the above changes.
6. In addition to the Constitutional changes there will also be a resolution pertaining to the ongoing funding of the organisation.
7. Should you seek any further information or require clarification on the issues raised, please contact me.
8. Observers are welcome - please advise the AHBIC office if you wish to attend by Monday 28 September 2009 as we will need to cater for the event.

Stephen Ware
Executive Director

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

Re-convened Annual General Meeting

to be held at

Quality Hotel, Melbourne Airport, 265 Mickleham Road Tullamarine Victoria

on 12 October 2009 commencing at 11:00am

AGENDA

Attendees:

- 12 Delegates from Federal Council of Australian Apiarists Associations
- 3 Delegates from Honey Packers and Marketers Association
- 2 Delegates from National Council of Crop Pollination Associations
- 2 Delegates from Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association

1. Opening

2. Apologies

3. Consideration of Constitutional Changes *(Attachment 1)*

In accordance of Section 19 of the AHBIC Constitution notice is hereby given of the Association's intent to amend its constitution in accordance with Attachment 1.

Member Associations should empower their delegate to vote on and /or amend any proposed constitutional changes that may be put forward.

Member Associations should formulate their views and make known their wishes to their elected AHBIC Delegates.

4. AHBIC Funding

5. Election of Office Bearers

Chairperson

Deputy Chairperson

6. Election of Executive Board Members

7. Operation and Appointment of Committees

- 7.1 Disease & Quarantine
- 7.2 Education
- 7.3 Resource
- 7.4 Food Safety and Prevention of Residues
- 7.5 Other committees as per conference decisions

8 Meeting Close

PROPOSED RESOLUTIONS

1. That Section 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3 of the AHBIC Constitution be amended to delete FCAAA and replaced with the six beekeeping associations.
2. That Section 4.1, 4.2 & 4.3 be amended to include: a representative from Capilano Beekeepers Limited (CBL) and a representative of the non-commercial beekeeping sector.
3. That Section 4.9 is added to allow for the election of a non-commercial beekeeping sector.
4. That Section 5.1 is amended to allow for the Council from time to time to implement regulations and to suspend such standing orders to allow members of industry to move, second and debate resolutions.
5. A new Section 5.1.2 has been added.
6. That Section 5.2 is amended to allow for the Chairperson of AHBIC to be elected for two (2) years at each bi-annual Annual General Meeting.
7. That Section 5.2.4 be amended to allow for any financial member (of two years standing) of a member association as named in the Constitution shall be eligible for nomination and election to the AHBIC Executive Committee of Management, including the offices of Chairperson and Vice Chairperson.
8. That Section 5.3.4 is amended to allow for the Deputy Chairperson to be elected as per Section 4.3.
9. That Section 5.4 be amended to allow for an Executive Committee of five (5) persons comprising the Chairperson, Deputy Chairperson and three (3) committee members appointed at the Annual General Meeting.
10. That Section 5.5 is amended to allow for the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to be elected for a term of two (2) years running alternatively. The first year being the election of Chairperson and the next two Executive Members being determined by the highest recorded votes being for a bi-annual term.
11. That Section 5.6 is amended to allow for candidates for the elections of position on the AHBIC Executive Committee, including the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson be lodged with the Executive Director 30 days in advance of the Annual General Meeting.
12. A new Section 5.7 has been added.
13. That Section 7.1 is amended to allow other sources of funding of the peak body.
14. That Section 8.2 is amended to allow for vacancies between Annual General Meetings to be filled by postal vote.
15. That Section 12.3 is amended to allow for the majority of votes to pass an ordinary resolution at Council Meetings and Executive Meetings
16. That Section 19 be amended to allow the Constitution be changed by a two thirds majority instead of the existing three quarters.
17. That Annexure 1 and 2 be deleted.

EFFECT OF RESOLUTIONS

1. FCAAA is replaced by six beekeeping associations this is consistent with the AHBIC Review.
2. Capilano Beekeepers Limited and the non-commercial beekeeping sector are represented. This allows all members of industry to sit around the table.
3. That there is an election of a non-commercial beekeeping representative. This allows for the industry to pursue the introduction of a hive levy which will necessitate the non-commercial sector having the ability to put their views forward
4. This is to allow non members of council from time to time to move, second and debate resolutions should AHBIC wish to adopt a 'Conference' style structure in the future.
5. The effect of this is to allow member organisations the opportunity to attend any AHBIC Executive meeting and to address it at the invitation of the Chair. It also has the effect of removing the suggestion that AHBIC is a closed shop.
6. This allows for the election of a Chairperson for two years at each bi-annual AGM again consistent with the Review's recommendation that AHBIC move towards two year terms for the Executive Committee.
7. This allows for any financial member (of 2 years standing) to be eligible for nomination and election.
8. This allows for the direct election of the Deputy Chairperson from all Council delegates and not only from the HPMAA
9. The Executive Committee to consist of five (5) persons. This reduces the existing Executive to five whilst allowing the direct election of Executive members.
10. This allows for the Chairperson and Deputy Chairperson to be elected for two (2) years running alternatively.
11. All candidates for elections to lodge with the Executive Director 30 days in advance of AGM. This is a procedural resolution only.
12. This introduces a rule preventing an Executive Member for serving longer than six (6) consecutive years but does not prevent a member from seeking re-election by standing down.
13. This allows for other sources of funding for the peak body. This is a procedural resolution only.
14. This allows for vacancies between AGMs to be filled by postal vote. This is a procedural resolution only.
15. This allows for a majority of votes in favour to carry a resolution at Council Meetings and Executive Meetings.
16. This allows the Constitution to be changed by two thirds rather than three quarters.
17. Annexure 1 and 2 are deleted as they really served no useful purpose and this can be achieved by a resolution of Council and relevant contracts with appropriate parties.

The following reports were presented at the Annual General Meeting:

VARROA IN NEW GUINEA - Dr Denis Anderson, CSIRO

Dr Denis Anderson outlined the recent developments in Papua New Guinea and in respect of the Varroa mite. Dr Denis Anderson among other things reported:

A population of *Varroa jacobsoni* mites was discovered in 2008 in Papua New Guinea that could readily reproduce on both worker and drone broods of *A. mellifera*. This newfound ability contrasts markedly with that of the mites' ancestors, which lacked the ability to reproduce on *A. mellifera* and were only able to reproduce on the drone brood of the local strain of *A. cerana* (a Java haplotype of *A. cerana*), which was first introduced to New Guinea from Java in the 1970's.

This 'shift' in *V. jacobsoni* reproductive ability in PNG has resulted in the large-scale death of *A. mellifera* colonies since 2006 and has caused hardship for local beekeepers. The 'new' mites are widespread, well established and cannot be eradicated from New Guinea.

The 'new' *V. jacobsoni* in PNG presents a new biosecurity threat to the Australian honeybee industry. Answers to the following questions are needed to fully clarify the threat:

1. Is the 'new' mites' life cycle and effects on *A. mellifera* the same as for *V. destructor* on *A. mellifera*?
2. Can the 'new' mite reproduce on the Java genotype of *A. cerana*?
3. Can the 'new' mite be effectively controlled with known acaricides?
4. Has the 'new' mite transmitted new microbial pathogens (particularly viruses) from *A. cerana* to *A. mellifera*?
5. Does the 'new' mite transmit or activate known microbial pathogens of *A. mellifera*?
6. Did the mite in PNG originate from a single female mother mite, or from multiple mother mites?

BIOSECURITY FOR BEES AND THE RESPONSE TO THE PARLIAMENTARY INQUIRY

- Dr Glynn Maynard, DAFF Animal & Plant Health

Dr Glynn Maynard, replacing Mr Tom Aldred, reported on what the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry are doing that will enhance Australia's preparedness, response and recovery to key Biosecurity threats to honeybees and pollination, particularly Varroa mite:

- Increasing our understanding about pollination requirements in Australia
- Improving our preparedness in the event of a significant incursion, including business continuity
- Reviewing monitoring and surveillance to ensure sound risk return
- Building relationships and networks between governments, industry and research bodies.

NOSEMA CERANAE IN AUSTRALIA - Dr Michael Hornitzky, NSW Department of Primary Industries

Nosemosis is the most widespread of adult bee diseases and causes significant economic losses to beekeepers worldwide. This disease was originally thought to be caused by a single *Nosema* sp, *Nosema apis*, a microsporidian which has a range of effects on honey bee colonies and adult bees; these include spring dwindling of adult bee populations, decreased honey production, decreased brood production and in severe cases nosemosis may kill colonies. *N. apis* reduces the lifespan of infected bees by about half in colonies in spring and summer. The capacity of infected bees to feed young larvae is reduced resulting in up to 15% of eggs in severely infected colonies failing to produce mature honey bee larvae in early summer and infected queens are generally superseded within a few weeks.

In 1994, a microsporidian similar to *N. apis* was described in Asian honey bees (*Apis cerana*) from China. This parasite, called *Nosema ceranae*, was subsequently detected in European honey bees (*Apis mellifera*) in Taiwan. More recently it has been found in Brazil, USA, Vietnam, and much of Europe.

In the past three years a new condition called Colony Collapse Disorder (CCD) disorder has been responsible for the death of hundreds of thousands of honey bee colonies. The loss of such a large number of honey bee colonies has had a significant impact on the pollination of seed and food crops and threatens food security.

The precise cause of CCD is unknown but it appears that the disorder has a multifactorial cause. There is little doubt that one of these causes is *Nosema ceranae*.

In 2007/2008 the Rural Industries Research & Development Corporation funded a survey of honey bee colonies in Australia to determine whether *Nosema ceranae* infected bees in Australia. The parasite was found in bees from Queensland, Victoria, South Australia, Tasmania and New South Wales. Western Australia is the only state in which this parasite has not been found.

We are currently involved in a follow up industry funded project to determine the prevalence of *Nosema ceranae* in the eastern States and its impact on honey bee colonies in Australia.

AUSTRALIAN QUEEN BEE BREEDING PROGRAM - Mr Bruce White

The Australian Queen Bee Breeding Program (AQBBP), run by the Australian Queen Bee Breeding Group (AQBBG), is at a crossroads. When set up there was a high expectation that the industry would embrace it by purchasing breeder queens from the program. Sales have not met that expectation.

There is no question that the stock is of good quality and will do the job expected of it by beekeepers. However, the cost of maintaining that core of breeding stock, carrying out evaluations and replication is not cheap. This means that the sale price of breeder queens has to be higher than queen breeders and beekeepers have been used to paying in the past.

Currently the program has the next round of queen bees instrumentally inseminated. The evaluation process has been amended on the advice of Peter Oxley who has been to Europe studying evaluation schemes. This replication of evaluation stock will take place in spring this year.

One of the problems in the past has been that when the evaluated queen bees come up for sale they are around 12 months or more old. This means that queen breeders and beekeepers buying them for use in raising queen bees have a limited time in which to raise stock from them. The AQBBP is addressing this issue by now offering for sale queen bees from the evaluated lines, but not evaluated, inseminated from the evaluated line of choice. This will mean that a young queen bee is available that will last longer as a breeder queen from which to raise stock than the previously evaluated stock.

The evaluated stock will still be available for purchase but recent sales show that there will not be a big demand for these because of the expectation and way the breeder queen bees are used.

So the Executive of the AQBBG would urge queen breeders and beekeepers to look seriously at sourcing some of their breeder queens from the program so that it can remain viable. Branches of Associations should also consider buying queens and making progeny available to their members. This could be a way of increasing Branch membership.

Failure to sell queens will mean that the AQBBP will fold. This would be a serious blow for the beekeeping industry having in mind the amount of effort that has gone into bringing this stock together and the efforts that have been put into evaluating and maintaining the stock.

The AQBBP continues to enjoy a good relationship with Dr. Ben Oldroyd and Peter Oxley from the University of Sydney. Their input into the program is a valuable part of the success of the reproduction of the stock in the program.

HONEY BEE RESEARCH & DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE (HBRDC)

- Dr David Dall & Mr Des Cannon

Dr David Dall and Mr Des Cannon GAVE a report which included the following:

- Honeybee R & D Advisory Committee
- RIRDC Pollination R & D Program
- Pollination Australia
- RIRDC Honeybee R & D Program
- Current R & D Program Funding
- Research Projects completed in 2008-09
- Projects to continue in 2009-10 and
- New Projects

AHBIC REVIEW - Mr Bill Weiss

Mr Bill Weiss presented the AHBIC Funding Review Committee Report which included 35 Recommendations. Mr Weiss advised that 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.

2010 CONFERENCE DATES

FCAAA	Queensland Beekeepers Association	17 - 18 June
	New South Wales Apiarists Association	20 - 21 May
	Tasmanian Beekeepers Association	4 - 5 June
	WA Farmers Federation- Beekeeping Section	11 - 12 June
	South Australian Apiarists Association	10 - 11 June
	Victorian Apiarists Association	2 - 3 June

Honey Packers and Marketers Association	26 May
National Council of Crop Pollination Associations	19 June
Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association	19 May
Australian Honey Bee Industry Council	20 - 21 June
Federal Council of Australian Apiarists' Associations	20 June

AWARD OF EXCELLENCE

Mr Keith McIlvride was this year's recipient of the AHBIC Award of Excellence. This award is presented for services to the industry.

Keith has served the industry in many ways: HBRDC Chair, the Organising Committee for Apimondia 2007, the Queen Bee Breeders' Group as well as a long time member of the NSW Apiarists' Association. He was also instrumental in setting up the AHBIC website.

Keith has always been passionate about the industry and there can be no debate that industry is better off for Keith's efforts. We sincerely thank him for his support.



Chairman Lindsay Bourke presenting Keith with his award at the AHBIC Dinner

NEW ZEALAND RECONSIDERS AUSTRALIAN HONEY IMPORTS

www.tvnz.co.nz - 7 July 2009

The New Zealand Ministry of Agriculture and Forestry (MAF) is stepping through the process of potentially clawing back its approval of honey imports from Australia.

It is now giving “careful consideration” to an independent panel’s report on the requirements governing future imports of bee products from Australia.

MAF developed and implemented an import health standard in 2006 – leading to the import of 2,000kg of Australian honey in December 2006 – but it was successfully challenged by the bee industry.

The National Beekeepers’ Association – which took the case against MAF director-general Murray Sherwin – pointed to MAF’s acceptance that honey imports meant *Paenibacillus alvei* (*P.alvei*) bacteria would eventually be introduced to New Zealand.

An Erma ruling on 12 February 2007, concluded the bacteria would be a new organism in New Zealand.

The beekeepers’ view was that Australian honey should not be allowed in unless the risks of *P.alvei* had been considered by Erma – a view upheld by the Court of Appeal.

But then Biosecurity Minister Jim Anderton said the decision made the nation’s border protection system unworkable.

“If the law is not amended, we will have an unworkable situation at New Zealand’s border,” he told parliament last year.

MAF claimed it was not possible to test for all new micro-organisms on imported goods – over 100,000 mail items and 1,500 shipping containers arrive at the border daily – and unnecessary testing could leave New Zealand open to complaints of using a non-tariff trade barrier.

Law changes were made to require “passenger organisms” to be assessed under the Biosecurity Act, rather than the Hazardous Substances and New Organisms Act, even when they were new to New Zealand.

Re-Activating imports under the re-instated health standard has been suspended until MAF considered an independent panel’s views on whether any amendment to the rules was required.

Sherwin said the report pointed to some areas in which the scientific evidence had evolved since the original risk analysis for the standard was undertaken. “It also raises some trade policy matters which are not strictly related to the underlying questions of the science behind the proposed standard,” he said. “These issues require careful consideration.”

Sherwin will take advice on international trade obligations before deciding in about a month’s time whether changes to the standard are required.

NATURAL & SUPERFOODS SYMPOSIUM

Join food marketing compliance specialists Food Legal-LawMedia Pty Ltd for this information-packed symposium. You will be provided with everything they need to know about natural and superfoods - a burgeoning sector in the food industry.

Presenters at the four hour Symposium include Adjunct Professor Joe Lederman of FoodLegal, Clare Hughes from leading consumer group Choice, Jane Allen from FSANZ, Associate Professor Peter Williams from the Smart Foods Centre of Wollongong University, food science expert Dr Dilip Ghosh from NutriConnect and food technologist Richard Stenning of GNT International.

Date/Time: 10 August 2009 - 8:30am-1:00pm
Location: The Menzies Hotel, Carrington Street, Sydney
Cost: \$385 (incl. GST) per person

BOOKING ESSENTIAL - Bookings close by August 3 or earlier if numbers capacity reached. More information can be found at: www.foodlegal.com.au/training/course/details/

EDUCATION DOCUMENTS ONLINE

AHBIC has produced training material to assist recognised training organisations to provide assistance in apiary training.

This material is now available on the AHBIC website: www.honeybee.org.au

- Certificate II in Agriculture specialising in Beekeeping
- Certificate III in Agriculture specialising in Beekeeping
- Certificate IV in Agriculture specialising in Beekeeping

These certificates are nationally recognised. They will provide an excellent grounding in beekeeping skills and knowledge, as well as the general skills needed to be a good all-round employee or manager of a beekeeping business.