

**THE AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY  
BIOSECURITY CODE OF PRACTICE**

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## INTRODUCTION

### The Objectives of the Code

The Australian Honey bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice (the Code) has been developed in consultation with beekeepers and governments to provide a clear framework for Australian beekeepers to engage in best-practice biosecurity. The objectives of the Code are to:

- Increase productivity in the Australian honey bee industry by improving the general level of disease and pest control by Australian beekeepers.
- Assist beekeepers in recognising exotic pests and diseases of bees and preparation for an exotic or emerging disease response.
- Ensure beekeepers conduct regular surveillance for the presence of exotic pests and diseases.
- Assist in the management of significant endemic diseases of bees, particularly American foulbrood (AFB).
- Facilitate the cross-border movement of bees through adoption of a single national code for biosecurity practices.
- To ensure the future viability and sustainability of the Australian honey bee industry.

The Code underpins the National Bee Biosecurity Program and is based on the principles of good biosecurity. It describes the outcomes a beekeeper needs to achieve for good pest and disease prevention and control. It is not a manual on how to keep bees; it tells beekeepers what they must achieve but how they achieve it will be up to the individual and will be influenced by their situation. The standards set in the Code are only those things that all beekeepers should be doing to minimise the impact of pests and diseases on their hives.

### The Principles of Good Biosecurity

The Code has been developed to incorporate fundamental biosecurity principles into the practices of all Australian beekeepers. In the context of beekeeping, biosecurity can be defined as:

*“A set of preventive measures designed to reduce the risk of spread of pests or infectious diseases in bees”*

The principles for good beekeeping biosecurity are:

#### **Training and planning**

Beekeepers and their employees should be appropriately trained in disease and pest prevention, identification and control. Our understanding of bee pests and diseases and the tools we have available to manage them are continually evolving so regular refreshing of training, even for experienced beekeepers, is important to keep knowledge up to date.

Beekeepers should plan ahead – know in advance how they will respond to a disease or pest detection. All beekeepers should have a written biosecurity plan that is regularly updated as their situation changes.

### **Reducing exposure to disease**

Exposure of bees to disease should be reduced by minimising the movement of hives. Known disease “hot spots” should be avoided where possible. This is often difficult for commercial beekeepers who must follow honey flow or pollination opportunities but, as a fundamental biosecurity principle, movements should be minimised.

Bees, feed and equipment should only be obtained from a reliable and reputable source. Introduced bees should be segregated (quarantined) and tested pre-purchase or post-arrival to ensure freedom from disease. Second-hand equipment should be sterilised before introduction. All steps to prevent robbing of hives should be implemented.

### **Controlling the potential spread of undetected disease**

Beekeeping activities are often the major cause of spread of disease between hives within an apiary. Larger apiaries should be divided into smaller, individually identified units and the movement of bees and equipment between these units should be eliminated or strictly controlled to limit the spread of any introduced pest or disease (a barrier system).

### **Observing bees for signs of pests and diseases**

Bees, brood and hive material should be regularly inspected for evidence of pests and diseases – early detection means faster control and minimal spread. Regular testing for AFB is essential and sugar shaking or other tests for exotic mites should be part of the routine disease surveillance protocol. Detection or suspicion of any notifiable disease or any unusual disease in an apiary must be promptly reported to the relevant state or territory authority.

### **Controlling pests and diseases**

All beekeepers should have pre-established response plans for potential pest and disease situations (i.e. they should know in advance what to do if they detect a pest or disease). Pests and diseases should be actively controlled to ensure they do not spread within the apiary or to other apiaries.

### **Keeping accurate records**

Clear and complete records must be kept of all biosecurity-related actions and observations. Hives or clusters of hives should be clearly identified and accurate records of movements kept for traceability. Templates for record keeping are very simple and are available through most beekeeping organisations and societies or can be downloaded from <http://beeaware.org.au/biosecurity/----->.

### **Hive and equipment maintenance**

All hives, equipment and vehicles should be kept clean and well-maintained.

With these principles in mind, the Code has been written to provide a set of clear outcomes that all beekeepers need to achieve to raise the overall level of disease management in Australian bees.

## **Who Does the Code Apply To?**

To achieve a truly national approach to pest and disease prevention and control all beekeepers need to be proactive in the management of their apiaries. For this reason, the honey bee industry and

governments have agreed that compliance with this Biosecurity Code of Practice is mandatory for all beekeepers. However, it is acknowledged that commercial beekeepers are more likely to move hives around the country and move into areas of high bee density. They therefore pose a greater risk of disease spread to other beekeepers and it is appropriate that they should have a higher level of biosecurity. Consequently, some parts of the Code (Section C) only apply to beekeepers who manage 50 or more hives.

### **Monitoring Compliance with the Code**

Compliance with the Code is actively monitored through a combined system of self-certification and random or targeted inspection of beekeepers' records and assessment of biosecurity practices. Currently, this monitoring is focused on beekeepers who manage 50 or more hives. They are required to certify at the time of re-registration that they are in compliance with the Code including the maintenance of appropriate records. It is an offence to provide a false statement regarding compliance and any beekeeper doing so may be subjected to a fine or prosecution.

Each year, the records of a sample of beekeepers in each state and territory will be inspected and their biosecurity practices will be assessed to provide an independent appraisal of their compliance. Using the principle that "if it's not written down, it wasn't done", this inspection of records and assessment of biosecurity practices will give a high level of assurance that a beekeeper is complying with this Code. If there are any concerns with the beekeeper's records, the assessment may also include physical examination of hives.

## SECTION A: INTERPRETATION AND SCOPE

### Definitions

Throughout the **Code**, defined words are in **bold italics**. State and territory legislation may have slightly different definitions for some of these terms but for the purposes of this Code of Practice:

**American foulbrood** means infection of a hive by *Paenibacillus larvae* spores.

**Appliance** means any article, apparatus or implement used in connection with the keeping of bees or the extraction or storage of honey.

**Approved** means approved by the relevant state or territory authority (see definition below).

**Approved bee pest and disease management course** means:

- (a) Unit AHCBEK306A (Manage pests and disease within a honey bee colony) of the Certificate III in Beekeeping or any replacement unit approved by the AgriFood Skills Australia, or
- (b) any equivalent course approved for the purpose by the **relevant state or territory authority**.

**Approved laboratory** means a testing laboratory approved by the **relevant state or territory authority** for the purposes of testing honey for the presence or absence of American foulbrood spores.

**Assessor** means a person approved for the purpose of assessing records and/or inspecting hives to verify a beekeeper's compliance with this Code of Practice. This will usually be the Bee Biosecurity Officer or other nominated representative from a state or territory authority.

**Auditable system** means a series of actions that are legibly recorded in English to a level enabling an independent person to review the records and understand what processes were undertaken, when they were undertaken and what outcomes were observed. These records must be retained for a period of at least three years.

**Beekeeper** means any person who keeps bees or a person who is in charge of bees. This includes apiary managers.

**Beekeeper Biosecurity Training and Assessment Program** means a training program and multiple-choice questionnaire, administered by an approved body, to assess a beekeeper's knowledge of the prevention, identification, reporting and control of significant pests and diseases of bees. This may be a computer-based program and questionnaire.

**Code** means the "Australian Honey Bee Industry Biosecurity Code of Practice" (this document).

**Foundation** means material impressed with the pattern of cell bases on which bees build comb.

**Hive** means any receptacle, or any component of a receptacle, which houses bees or which has housed bees.

**Hive identification code** means the hive identification code, registration number or other brand allocated to the beekeeper by the relevant state or territory authority.

**Nationally notifiable Disease** means a pest or disease of bees declared by the national Animal Health Committee as a nationally notifiable disease. In the case of bee pests and diseases they are:

- Tracheal mite (*Acarapis woodi*)
- American foulbrood (*Paenibacillus larvae*)
- European foulbrood (*Melissococcus plutonius*)
- Tropilaelaps mite (*Tropilaelaps clareae* and *T. mercedesae*)
- *Varroa destructor*
- *Varroa jacobsoni*

**Notifiable disease** means a pest, disease, agent, syndrome or substance declared as notifiable by the relevant state or territory authority where the bees are located. In South Australia, these are referred to as “notifiable conditions”, in Queensland as “notifiable incidents”.

**Relevant state or territory authority** means the person in each state or territory vested with the authority register beekeepers and to grant approvals or exemptions in relation to this Code. They are:

State or territory	Relevant person	Defining legislation
Australian Capital Territory	Chief Veterinary Officer	<i>Animal Diseases Act 2005</i>
New South Wales	Director General	<i>Apiaries Act 1985</i>
Queensland	Chief Executive	<i>Biosecurity Bill 2013 (Draft)</i>
Victoria	Minister for Agriculture and Food Security	<i>Livestock Disease Control Act 1994</i>
South Australia	Chief Inspector of Stock	<i>Livestock Act 1997</i>
Tasmania	Chief Veterinary Officer	<i>Animal Health Act 1995</i>
Western Australia	Director General	<i>Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Identification and Movement of Stock and Apiaries) Regulations 2013</i>
Northern Territory	Chief Inspector of Livestock	<i>Livestock Act 2009</i>

**Significant pest or disease** means any pest or disease that may weaken the hive or pose a risk of transmission to other hives.

**Swarm catch box** means any box or container specifically placed with the intention of catching swarming bees.

## Interpretation of the Code

The **Code** contains elements that a **beekeeper must** do and some elements that a **beekeeper should** do. Where “must” is used the **beekeeper** has no discretion about complying with the **Code** – failure to comply with a “must” is an offence that may render the **beekeeper** liable to be fined or prosecuted. These are identified in the **Code** as a “REQUIREMENT”. Where “should” is used, this is considered highly desirable or best practice and **beekeepers** are strongly encouraged to comply with the element. It is not, however, mandatory and failure to comply is not illegal. These are identified in the **Code** as a “RECOMMENDATION”

## Scope of the Code

Section B of the **Code** (parts 1 – 10) applies to all beekeepers and specific requirements and recommendations are marked in green.

Section C of the **Code** (parts 11 – 14) applies only to beekeepers with 50 or more hives. Requirements and recommendations are marked in purple.

Therefore, **beekeepers** who manage 50 or more hives must comply with ALL sections of the **Code**. Although Section C is not mandated for smaller **beekeepers**, they are encouraged to adopt these requirements as best practice where appropriate.

## State and Territory Legislation Takes Precedence Over the Code

All states and territories have legislation applying to beekeepers and the practice of beekeeping. The **Code** does not replace this state legislation but is complementary to it. Where the **Code** contradicts local state or territory legislation, the state or territory legislation takes precedence.

## SECTION B: THE REQUIREMENTS FOR ALL BEEKEEPERS

### 1. All Beekeepers Must Register

It is essential that there is an up to date register of beekeepers and their contact details so they can be notified quickly in the event of an emergency disease or natural disaster. It is also important that up to date information on the number of hives present in each state and territory of Australia is available to inform decisions on disease control and eradication.

#### REQUIREMENT

- 1.1 All **beekeepers** must register with their **relevant state or territory authority** and pay the prescribed fee (if any) set by that authority.
- 1.2 At the time of registration, in addition to other details required by the registering authority, the **beekeeper** must provide an accurate count of the number of **hives** under the **beekeeper's** control.

## 2. Beekeepers Must Report Notifiable Diseases

The requirement to report notifiable pests and diseases exists in all states and territory legislation but it is included in the Code to reinforce this important obligation. The prompt reporting of notifiable diseases is essential for control and eradication. Governments also use disease reporting to compile disease prevalence data to support trade with interstate and overseas partners.

### REQUIREMENT

- 2.1 A **beekeeper** must report the detection of any **nationally notifiable disease** or suspicion of any nationally notifiable disease to their relevant state or territory department by the quickest practicable means. Verbal reports should be followed up in writing (for example, by e-mail, text message (SMS), fax or letter).
- 2.2 Individual states and territories have additional reporting requirements and/or exemptions for reporting **notifiable diseases** and a **beekeeper** must ensure that they are aware of these requirements and comply with them.

### 3. Hives Must be Regularly Inspected for Pests and Diseases

All beekeepers must regularly look for pests and diseases in their hives and do so in a manner that will maximise the likelihood that they will detect any present. The Code does not go into detail on how the inspections are made because there are a number of equally good methods. It is the responsibility of individual beekeepers to ensure that their inspection technique is adequate and it must include at least one simple technique to examine for exotic pests. Methods for these techniques can be downloaded from:

<http://beeaware.org.au/biosecurity/keeping-honey-bees-healthy/surveillance-for-exotic-pests/>

The Code requires beekeepers to inspect their hives at least twice per year and keep accurate, auditable records of their finding. This is the minimum requirement for good bee husbandry and beekeepers are encouraged to inspect more frequently. Detection or suspicion of any notifiable disease or bee pest must be reported to the relevant state or territory authority (see Section B.1).

Note this Section applies to **all** beekeepers, large and small.

#### REQUIREMENT

3.1 A **beekeeper** must implement and maintain an **auditable system** of visually inspecting each **hive** for general hive strength and for the presence of pests and diseases.

Inspections must be carried out:

- a) In a manner that will enable likely detection of any significant pest or disease present in the **hive** and at least involving the visual inspection of the equivalent of three full-depth frames of brood after shaking off adult bees, and
- b) As often as necessary to prevent inter-hive spread of disease and/or colony death, and
- c) Prior to the administration of any pesticide or antibiotic, and
- d) In any other case at least twice in every year, at a minimum of 4 consecutive calendar months apart.

3.2 The examination of the hive should include an accepted technique to check for the presence of exotic pests such as Varroa or Tropilaelaps mites and Braula fly. Acceptable methods are:

- Sugar shake
- Alcohol wash
- Drone uncapping

#### 4. Beekeepers Must Control or Eradicate Significant Pests and Diseases and Must Manage Weak Hives

A *significant pest or disease* is defined in Section A of the Code as any pest or disease that may weaken the hive or pose a risk of transmission to other hives. If a beekeeper finds a significant pest or disease in a hive they must take appropriate steps to prevent its spread to other hives. In the case of notifiable diseases they must be reported to the relevant authority and controlled and/or eradicated in accordance with state or territory legislation.

Robber bees provide a major pathway for spread of infectious diseases like American foulbrood (AFB) so maintaining strong hives is an important preventative measure. There are a variety of actions a beekeeper can take to manage a weak or diseased hive. This Code does not prescribe any particular course of action but stipulates an outcome that must be achieved.

If AFB is detected, a beekeeper is required to take action to bee-proof the infected hive(s) and to destroy or sterilise the hive(s) as soon as practicable. Elimination of AFB is part of good beekeeping and no compensation will be payable to the beekeeper for hives destroyed due to AFB infection. Because antibiotics do not kill AFB spores, their use to control AFB is prohibited.

##### REQUIREMENT

- 4.1 All **beekeepers** must take appropriate steps to control and/or eradicate a **significant pest or disease** from their **hives**.
- 4.2 Dead **hives** or **hives** with insufficient bees to prevent robbing must be immediately removed from the apiary and treated in a manner that will render them impervious to robber bees and prevent leakage of honey from the hive.
- 4.3 Weak **hives** must be managed to ensure they do not become attractive to robber bees.
- 4.4 **Hives** affected by a **significant pest or disease** must be treated in a manner that will minimise the risk of the pest or disease transferring to another hive.
- 4.5 If a **beekeeper** identifies **American foulbrood** in a **hive** they must, after the field bees have returned to the **hive**, immediately implement and maintain an **auditable system** of identification and isolation of the affected **hive** and any affected appliances and minimising the risk of spread of disease from the **hive**. This includes:
  - a) Destruction of all bees and infected brood combs in the **hive**, and
  - b) Rendering and maintaining the **hive** and **appliances** bee-proof until they are sterilised or destroyed.
  - c) In this context “bee-proof” means eliminating bee access to the affected appliances and **hive** contents including honey that may leak from the **hive**.
- 4.6 If it is not reasonable to immediately implement the steps in 4.5 and the **hive** is not in danger of being robbed, they must be implemented within seven (7) days.

4.7 A **beekeeper** must eliminate **American foulbrood** from an infected **hive** or **appliance** by sterilisation or destruction as soon as is reasonable but, in any case, before sale or reuse of the **hive** or **appliance**. Infected brood comb must be destroyed not irradiated.

4.8 If a beekeeper elects to sterilise an infected hive it must be either:

(a) Subjected to gamma irradiation at a minimum radiation dose of 10 kiloGray.

or

(b) Dipped for a minimum of 10 minutes in hot wax held at a minimum temperature of 150°C. Frames, combs and **hive** mats and any plastic parts should not be dipped in hot wax but should be destroyed by burning or irradiated as appropriate. Complete records of the process including observed temperatures of the wax at the start and end of each dipping must be maintained.

4.9 If the disease cannot be eliminated through sterilisation, the **hive** or **appliance** must be destroyed by either:

(a) Burning and burial of the remnants so that they are covered by at least 30 cm of soil, or

(b) Any other means approved by the **relevant state or territory authority**.

4.10 A **beekeeper** is not entitled to any compensation for the value of **hives, appliances** or equipment infected with **American foulbrood** and subsequently destroyed to achieve compliance with this **Code**.

4.11 A **beekeeper** must not use any antibiotic for the purposes of controlling **American foulbrood** in beehives.

## 5. Beekeepers Must Maintain Records of Biosecurity-related Actions and Observations

Good record keeping is critical to good beekeeping and good biosecurity. It provides evidence that an action was undertaken and accurate records are essential for tracing the source of disease outbreaks.

### REQUIREMENT

5.1 All **beekeepers** must keep records of:

- a) Dates of all **hive** inspections and observations from the inspections including an assessment of **hive** strength and any pests or diseases found.
- b) Dates and results of all honey tests or other independent assessments for the presence of **American foulbrood**.
- c) Details of honey extraction including date, source (geographic location), yield, container identifications and details of cleaning of plant, containers and equipment.
- d) Details of any **hive** and **appliance** identification and equipment tracing systems in place (barrier systems).
- e) Details of all actions taken to control pests or diseases.
- f) Dates and details of any **hive** treatments.
- g) Dates, times, number of **hives** and geographic locations of all movement of **hives** and **catch boxes** and the name of the person who moved them.
- h) Dates of receipt and sources of all queen bees, queen cells and packaged bees.
- i) Information that supports tracing of materials and bees including the identity, date of purchase and source of any used **hives, appliances** or other beekeeping equipment purchased by the **beekeeper**.
- j) Training records for the **beekeeper** and any employees of the **beekeeper** or any legal entity owning **hives**.

5.2 Records may be paper-based or electronic but the records must be an **auditable system** in English.

5.3 Records must be retained for a minimum of 3 years

## 6. Hive and Swarm Catch Boxes Must be Appropriately Constructed

Hives must be in good condition so that bees only enter and leave the hive through the entrance designed by the hive manufacturer. This will assist bees defend their hives from robber bees. To facilitate hive inspection hives must have combs in removable frames. Hives must be branded in accordance with state or territory regulations.

Top bar hives are permitted but only if the combs can be individually and separately removed from the hive without a need to cut or tear them from the walls of the hive.

Swarm catch boxes must be specifically constructed for that purpose and identified.

### REQUIREMENT

- 6.1 A *beekeeper* must ensure that all ***hives*** and ***swarm catch boxes*** have intact external surfaces with bee access only permitted via specifically designed and manufactured access points. Frames must be removable without cutting or tearing allowing visual inspection for disease.
- 6.2 The *hive* must be identified in accordance with relevant state or territory legislation.
- 6.3 A ***swarm catch box*** must only contain ***foundation*** (not honey or honeycomb) and must be clearly and legibly marked with the ***beekeeper's*** allocated ***hive identification code***.
- 6.4 ***Swarm catch boxes*** not on the property where the beekeeper resides must also be identified with the ***beekeeper's*** name (or company name) and a contact telephone number in characters at least 25 mm in height.

## 7. Apiary Sites Should Be Identified

The identification of apiary sites with clearly visible signage bearing contact details will enable the beekeeper to be contacted quickly in the event of an emergency (e.g. bushfire) or other potential threat to the bees (e.g. pesticide spray). Although hives are identified in most jurisdictions with brands or registration numbers, this does not facilitate rapid contact with the hive owner. This requirement is not mandatory but beekeepers are encouraged to comply.

This does not apply to hives located on the beekeeper's normal place of residence.

### RECOMMENDATION

7.1 In addition to the requirements of relevant state or territory legislation, all occupied apiary sites not on the **beekeeper's** own normal place of residence should be identified by a clearly visible notice legibly showing the apiarist's name (or company name) and a contact telephone number in lettering no less than 25 mm high.

7.2 **Beekeepers** are strongly encouraged to use the template available on the Plant Health website at:

<http://www.planthealthaustralia.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2012/12/Honey-Bee-biosecurity-sign.pdf>



## 8. Beekeepers Must Not Allow Hives or Appliances to Become Exposed or Neglected

Allowing hives or appliances to become exposed or neglected is an offence in all states and territories. Robbing of exposed or neglected hives is a major factor in the spread of pests and disease so this Section is included in the Code to reinforce the importance of failing to properly care for hives. Care of hives also means ensuring bees have ready access to suitable water so this requirement is also included.

### REQUIREMENT

8.1 A **beekeeper** must not leave a used **hive**, part of a used hive (including frames, combs, honey, foundation or beeswax) or an **appliance** exposed in a manner or under conditions likely to attract robber bees.

8.2 A **beekeeper** must not do any of the following:

- a) Abandon a **hive** previously-kept by the **beekeeper**, or
- b) Neglect the management or care of a **hive** kept by the beekeeper to the extent that the **hive** is likely to become infected with disease or attract robber bees, or
- c) Fail to destroy or properly dispose of any unwanted bees or part of a **hive** (including frames, combs, honey, **foundation** or beeswax).

8.3 A **beekeeper** must ensure bees under his or her care have access to water suitable to sustain the bees.

## 9. Hives and Appliances Must Be Transported Appropriately to Avoid Access By Robber Bees

Robbing of hives or honey during transportation is another potential route for disease spread. A beekeeper must not allow bees to have access to honey, that is on, or in, any appliance that is owned or controlled by that beekeeper. Part 4.2 of this Code requires beekeepers to make hives susceptible to robbing bee-proof and this equally applies during transportation. Hives and appliances containing honey that are likely to be robbed must be covered with bee-proof material.

### REQUIREMENT

- 9.1 During transportation, a **beekeeper** must take all necessary steps to prevent access of other bees to honey in hives or in or on appliances.
- 9.2 Bees must not have access to honey and **appliances** in mobile extracting plants at any time, including during transportation and when not in use.

## 10. Beekeepers Must Allow Their Operation to Be Assessed

The record keeping required in Part 5 of the Code provides the key to monitoring compliance with the Code. The adage that “if it’s not written down it wasn’t done” will apply. All beekeepers are required to keep records and beekeepers in charge of 50 or more hives are required to certify their compliance with this Code at the time of registration or re-registration (see Section C Part 14) and failure to do so will be a breach of the Code.

Some beekeepers will have their records inspected by an **Assessor** to verify this self-certification and beekeepers are required to cooperate with the **Assessor** and make their records available. An examination will normally only be a review of the beekeepers records but may include one or more on-site visits and inspection of individual **hives, appliances** or equipment.

To reflect the risk, these assessments will focus on beekeepers in charge of 50 or more hives but the requirement to make records available applies to ALL beekeepers and smaller beekeepers may be inspected if a serious breach of the Code is suspected.

If the Assessor determines that the beekeeper is not in compliance with the Code, the beekeeper may be fined, subjected to prosecution or, for a minor infringement, the beekeeper may be given the opportunity to rectify the failing within a specified period of time. The beekeeper will be responsible for any costs associated with re-inspection of the operation to verify compliance with the Code.

### REQUIREMENT

10.1 If a **beekeeper** is notified that they will be subjected to an examination by an **Assessor** for compliance with the **Code** the beekeeper must, within 30 days of any request:

10.1.1 Comply with all reasonable requests from the **Assessor** for access to the beekeepers records and provide any additional information.

10.1.2 Comply with all reasonable requests from the **Assessor** to inspect the beekeepers **hives, appliances** and equipment.

10.2 If the **Assessor** determines that the beekeeper is not in compliance with the **Code** the beekeeper may be fined, subjected to prosecution or, for a minor infringement, may be given the opportunity to rectify the failing within a specified time.

10.3 The beekeeper will be liable for the cost of any re-assessment to verify rectification of a non-compliance.

## SECTION C: ADDITIONAL REQUIREMENTS FOR BEEKEEPERS WHO MANAGE 50 OR MORE HIVES

### 11. Beekeepers Must Maintain a Barrier System of Hive Management

A major method of disease spread within an apiary is through the beekeeper transferring infected material between hives or using disease contaminated equipment between hives. A well-managed barrier management system minimises this spread. The system also assists in tracing the origin of disease and helps with control and eradication.

There are many different types of barrier systems but the principles are similar across all systems. The enterprise should be divided into clearly identified; isolated units and movement of hives, hive components and appliances between these units should be strictly controlled. Good record keeping is essential and all people working with the bees must understand how the system works.

Of course, the larger the enterprise, the more important a barrier system becomes. However, the Code does not prescribe which barrier system should be implemented as this will depend on the individual circumstances of the enterprise.

To maintain a good barrier system, parts of hives should not be interchanged during transportation as this can potentially spread disease from one hive to another.

Although the Code only mandates a barrier management system for beekeepers who manage 50 or more hives, its adoption by all beekeepers is strongly recommended.

#### REQUIREMENT

- 11.1 This requirement applies only to **beekeepers** who manage 50 or more **hives**.
- 11.2 A **beekeeper** must maintain a barrier management system
- 11.3 The barrier system must include:
  - (a) Clear, permanent marking and identification of **hives**, hive components and **appliances** within a barrier unit.
  - (b) Control of movement of **hives**, hive components and **appliances** between units.
  - (c) Purchased **hives** are quarantined and checked for disease prior to inclusion into the apiary.
  - (d) All apiary workers have a clear understanding of how the barrier management system operates.

## 12. Beekeepers Must Demonstrate a Minimum Level of Knowledge About Pests and Disease Identification and Management

A beekeeper must know how to identify pests and diseases in their hives and must have up-to-date knowledge on how to manage detected pests or diseases. This Section of the Code requires beekeepers who manage 50 or more hives to demonstrate that they have this knowledge by undertaking a formal assessment within 12 months of first registering or, if already registered, within 3 years of the implementation of this Code. This assessment can be in the form of on-line *Beekeeper Biosecurity Training and Assessment Program* or attendance at an approved bee pest and diseases management training course. To make sure knowledge is up to date, beekeepers will be required to recertify their knowledge by taking an on-line course or attending an approved training course at least once every 3 years. If a beekeeper does not comply with the requirements, they may be liable to a fine or prosecution.

### REQUIREMENT

- 12.1 This requirement applies only to **beekeepers** who manage 50 or more **hives**.
- 12.2 Within 12 months of first registering or, if already registered, within 3 years from the implementation date of this *Code*, a **beekeeper** must successfully complete either:
- a) An **approved pest and disease management course**, or
  - b) The **Beekeeper Biosecurity Training and Assessment Program** and correctly answered at least 90% of the assessment questions.
- 12.3 Subsequent to initial compliance with 11.2 above, to be eligible for re-registration, a **beekeeper** must have completed one of the programs described in 11.2(a) or 11.2(b) above in the 3 years prior to any application for re-registration.
- 12.4 The **beekeeper** will be responsible for any costs associated with the assessment

### 13. Beekeepers Must Have Honey Tested Annually for American Foulbrood

American foulbrood (AFB) is the most widespread and significant bee disease in Australia. Even experienced beekeepers may miss AFB on visual inspection of hives and laboratory evaluation of honey for AFB spores remains the most sensitive and accurate test for detection of the disease. This section requires commercial beekeepers (50 hives or more) to have an annual, independent test of their apiary for the disease. This will detect disease present at low levels and will provide a snapshot of the level of AFB in different geographical areas. Monitoring changes in the level of disease over time will also provide some evidence of the effectiveness of this Code.

All beekeepers, regardless of their hive numbers, should monitor their apiary for AFB so, while this Section of the Code is only mandated for beekeepers managing 50 or more hives, smaller beekeepers are strongly encouraged to regularly test their hives for the presence of AFB.

#### REQUIREMENT

- 13.1 This Section applies only to **beekeepers** who manage 50 or more hives.
- 13.2 A **beekeeper** must have their operation tested for the presence of **American foulbrood** at least once in every 12 consecutive months by:
  - a) The microbiological examination of a representative, composite honey sample by an **approved laboratory**, or
- 13.3 Where a **beekeeper** sends honey to a honey packer, the honey sample may be collected by the packer from submitted honey containers and consigned to an **approved laboratory**.
- 13.4 Where a **beekeeper** does not send honey to a honey packer, the **beekeeper** must submit to an **approved laboratory** one or more composite honey samples containing honey from a representative number of **hives** chosen randomly. This sample can be collected during the routine extraction of honey.
- 13.5 The **beekeeper** will be liable for all costs of collection, transportation and testing of honey samples collected for compliance with this **Code**.

## 14. Information Beekeepers with 50 or More Hives Must Provide With an Application for Registration or Renewal of Registration as a Beekeeper

This Section details the additional information a beekeeper with 50 or more hives must provide at the time of registration (or re-registration) to enable the registering authority to assess their compliance with the Code. This includes a declaration from the beekeeper that their operation and management of their bees is in compliance with the Code. Making a false declaration is a serious offence and may result in a fine, prosecution or refusal to register.

### REQUIREMENT

14.1 This Section applies only to **beekeepers** who manage 50 or more hives.

14.2 In addition to any other information required by **the relevant state or territory authority**, all applications for renewal of registration as a **beekeeper** must be accompanied by an accurate declaration, in the prescribed format, certifying:

- a) The **beekeeper's** status in respect to demonstration of knowledge of pest and disease management detailed in Section 12 of the **Code**.
- b) The date and result of the most recent laboratory honey test for **American foulbrood** spores.
- c) That the beekeeper management and operation is fully compliant with the **Code**.

## APPENDIX 1: CERTIFICATION OF COMPLIANCE WITH THE CODE

What was the date of your last successful completion of an approved Honey bee Pest and Disease Training Course or the Beekeeper Biosecurity Training and Assessment Program?

(Apiaries Biosecurity Code of Practice Section C Part 12)

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Have you completed two or more apiary inspections in the last 12 months involving at least the visual inspection of the equivalent of three full-depth frames of brood after shaking off adult bees?

(Code Section B Part 3)

YES/NO

Have you completed an approved test for the presence of exotic pests such as Varroa mites, Tropilaelaps mites and Braula fly at least twice in the past 12 months?

(Apiaries Biosecurity Code of Practice Section B Part 3)

Yes/No

Tick the method(s) used:

- Sugar shake
- Alcohol wash
- Drone uncapping

Date of your last laboratory honey test for American foul brood

(Apiaries Biosecurity Code of Practice Section C Part 13)

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Laboratory reference number

Result

Positive/Negative

I have maintained accurate, legible, records of all biosecurity-related activities in accordance with the Apiaries Biosecurity Code of Practice Section B Part 5

YES/NO

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

Name:

Signature:

Date: