



Australian Honey Bee Industry Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2023





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AHBIC Chair & CEO Report

Stephen Target & Danny LeFeuvre

Season

The last 12 months has been different and difficult for honey production especially in South Eastern Australia. A cold wet spring made early honey production virtually impossible. By the end of the season most areas of Australia had harvested a slightly below average honey crop.

The last two wet years should see most honey productive plant species bud for the future. Honey prices have started dropping as most honey packers have good stocks of honey in the warehouse. The price of beeswax has dropped by approximately 35% in recent months.

Border closures as a result of the varroa detection in the Newcastle NSW area made almond pollination difficult. No hives located in NSW were allowed into Victoria for almond pollination and a greatly reduced number of Queensland hives made the journey to Victorian almond orchards. This resulted in below optimal stocking rates in most Victorian almond orchards. NSW almond orchards had the required stocking rates but due to the weather, a below average fruit set occurred as was the case in Victoria. Almond pollination prices increased for the 2022 pollination season. Some Victorian orchards did offer significantly more money to entice more hives to travel.

Varroa created issues for the pollination of berries in the Coffs Harbour area. We worked with the DPI, Berries Australia and local beekeepers to come up with solutions within the biosecurity guidelines imposed by the varroa response.

Pollination requirements continue to increase as other agricultural industries plant high value crops that are reliant on honeybees for pollination.

Varroa

Varroa was detected in June 22 at the Port of Newcastle in port surveillance hives. A State Coordination Centre (SCC) was stood up at Orange. AHBIC had representatives continuously inside the SCC and providing valuable input to the response for the next five months.

AHBIC has supported NSW DPI as the lead agency for the varroa response and the ultimate varroa eradication effort. We were instrumental in getting compensation for recreational beekeepers that had hives destroyed. It is unprecedented to provide compensation to non-commercials in plant biosecurity responses and took a lot of work convincing affected parties to commit to it. For varroa eradication to succeed Australia needed every beekeeper to obey all biosecurity directions and hive movement restrictions. The compensation is an important part of encouraging the recreational beekeepers to comply with these orders.

Industry and AHBIC owe a BIG THANK YOU to ALL personnel who have been involved with the response.

When AHBIC joined Plant Health Australia varroa was classified as a category three pest despite our best efforts to have it classified as a category two pest. Thank you to the Almond Board Australia who initiated a recategorization of varroa to Category Two during this response. Category Two is an 80/20 cost sharing split between government and effected industries whereas Category Three is a 50/50 split.



AHBIC applied to the Federal Government for funding to employ a varroa coordinator, this was successful. Bianca Giggins was appointed on a twelve month contract with the aim of sourcing funding to secure the position further. The varroa response is ongoing and we attend morning briefings and provide input when needed. We have been proactive in instigating industry varroa information sessions both face to face community meetings and national webinars.

This incursion has highlighted the need for our industry to be better prepared and agree to Owner Reimbursement of Cost frameworks prior to any detection. Varroa is only one of the 13 high priority honey bee pests and the Varroa experience should be applied to the other priority bee pests. This should include all facets of our industry including sectors such as queen breeders and bee supply businesses.

The silver lining of varroa is that many pollination dependent industries now have a better understanding of their reliance on honeybees for pollination. All pollination dependent industries, plus state and federal government have supported us with our desire to eradicate varroa.

Thank you to NSW DPI for providing the resources and determination to keep the eradication despite the size and demand on resources.

Executive Business

The executive appointed Danny Le Feuvre as the permanent CEO in August. Lindsay Callaway was elected as an executive to fill the casual vacancy resulting from the appointment of the new CEO.

Numerous zoom meetings were conducted to provide guidance to the CEO early in the response. One physical meeting has been held in Canberra which also included a Strategic Plan workshop. Very few subcommittee meetings were held due to the workload generated by the varroa response.

AHBIC has entered a partnership with Bunnings for the potential benefit of all member body members.

We created a new imported honey subcommittee which has already had a meeting.

Biosecurity

AHBIC has renewed the Memorandum of Understanding with PHA who implement the National Bee Pest Surveillance Program (NBPSP) and the National Bee Biosecurity Program (NBBP). The funding agreement for the NBBP ends in December 2024 with funding beyond this being negotiated. The current model is unsustainable and we are working with PHA looking at different models for funding this important program to ensure continuity.

To be effective the sentinel hive program needs to be expanded and a reassessment of high priority ports be undertaken. The current funding relies heavily on the pollination dependent industries and honey levy monies will not financially support increasing the sentinel hive program.

We were successful in a grant for a Bee Pest Blitz campaign over two years. Due to late funding this was rolled out at the last minute to all states in 2023. This program will be further developed and expanded for next year.



Industry welcomes the Government's increased focus on biosecurity and the announcement of 'new' money for biosecurity in the budget. However, we are disappointed that industry was not consulted before announcing a 10% levy increase for pre border biosecurity measures in the May budget. We are aware that Meat and Livestock diseases and pests can severely impact our industry members. For example, a Foot and Mouth (FMD) outbreak will prevent beekeepers in that area from accessing properties to manage apiaries. We are working with the authorities to ensure any impacts to our industry are minimised.

Industry Issues

Loss of access to floral resources. This takes many forms, overlogging, high pesticide use, land clearing, poor land management, access not being maintained, land being recategorized as National Parks or biodiversity regions.

Cheap imported honey. Very little imported honey is tested for chemicals or adulteration. Imported honey is not an issue providing it is produced to the same high standard as Australian honey and priced fairly.

Carbon zero. This issue is on the horizon and we are working with our R&D bodies to understand the potential impacts this might have on our industry.

Increased fuel and energy costs. These directly affect the beekeeper's bottom line and reduces their business viability – this could eventually impact on Australia's food security.

Poor orchard design. Industry is not included when designing an orchard requiring honeybee pollination. Good orchard design improves pollination effectiveness by over 25%.

Lack of skilled workers. TOCAL has been conducting many industry training courses which is not flowing through to worker availability for commercial operators. Currently, to be eligible for skilled worker visa in the bee industry, migrants must hold a bachelors degree. This is not needed to meet the needs of our beekeeping businesses. Practical beekeeping knowledge/skills is the requirement. AHBIC has applied to have the skill requirement lowered to certificate 3 level which is more practical.

High cost of levy collection. This results in honey being sold, on which no levies are collected. This is due to collection costs being higher than the levy collected. This lost levies monies impacts on industry Research & Development and Biosecurity.

Research

Through active lobbying from AHIBC both AgriFutures and Hort Innovations have funded two varroa related research projects at short notice. These projects will provide information to industry on what management options are available to beekeepers based on our geographical and climatical conditions.

Horticulture Innovations Australia's (HIA) recent research project on how to bring queens and drone semen into Australia has been timely. More research is needed on bringing drone semen into Australia.



Pollination CRC Bid

We provided limited support for this. It is disappointing that industry was not included in the design of field trials for different plant species. Results of the bid will be known shortly.

General

The Australian Manuka Honey Association (AMHA) has been successful with their legal battle to prevent New Zealand from trade marking the word 'Manuka.' This has been a win for common sense and all Australian beekeepers.

Our brand recognition has been increased amongst ministers at all levels of government.

The Future

Our priority is to continue to support the Varroa response with the goal of eradication providing it is economical and deemed technically feasible to do so.

For most beekeepers a reassessment of their business regarding pollination may be needed. As acreage of pollination dependent crops increase so will the need for paid pollination hives. This may be a prime opportunity to diversify income streams.

With good subsoil moisture across most of Australia the next year looks good for honey production. Continued research to prove the health benefits of honey leading to higher value honeys, and further research to improve productivity and beekeepers bottom line is required.

The future would be improved if pollination dependent industries designed orchards for pollination and used trained pollination auditors.

For AHBIC a review of the strategic plan and a potential modernisation of our structure and financing is planned.

Summary

AHBIC members and the AHBIC team are to be commended for their efforts with the varroa response and to move forward the strategic plan for industry. We have been very fortunate that we have had a CEO that understands our industry and has been able to provide valuable timely input to the varroa response. Young beekeepers are getting involved with industry organisations which is great for our future.

Stephen Target

Danny LeFeuvre



New South Wales Apiarists Association Report

Stephen Fuller, President

Conference time! That means another year has passed and I must do a report on a year that has not been kind to the bee industry.

Only two weeks after our AGM in Sydney and I received a phone call from Dr Chris Anderson on the 22nd of June telling me that *Varroa destructor* has been identified in Newcastle. I had not even got the seat warm yet and I am facing the biggest pest to ever have hit our shores! This meant a lot of decisions had to be made for the better of the industry and an Emergency Order put in place. This was an extremely difficult time as we could not get answers because this was a live beast and we were fighting it hard.

It has now been almost twelve months since and where are we? Over 150 Infested premises have been identified, thousands of hives have been eradicated, many apiarists have been impacted and Red Zones covering many square kilometers. But DPI are still trying to eradicate this pest from our shores because the cost to our industry will be astronomical if we let Varroa go unchecked. I, along with the NSWAA Executive Council, put a survey out for members, so we knew how they wanted us to represent them all. This came back as a majority in favour for eradication and we continue to support your view. This has really changed beekeeping forever, even if DPI can eradicate Varroa this time.

Although *Varroa destructor* has taken a lot of our time, this with many meetings with Government, DPI and AHBIC, we have still managed to address other issues as they came up.

Government: This year we saw a state election held in March. This saw a change in government. We developed a good relationship with the previous Agriculture Minister, Dugald Saunders, and look forward to communicating with the new Agriculture Minister, Tara Moriarty, in the near future.

Honey: This year with floods everywhere from the north to the south it has been a strange year for honey gathering. From trucks being bogged two and three times in a night to trees flowering well out of time, borders being closed, it has been a real difficult year to harvest honey and some apiarists did not turn their extraction units on until well into the season. There were no real large flows to write about, but most got some honey in.

Resources: This area is always a difficult area to deal with as we have lots of parties to deal with and each one is different. Some forests impacted by the 2019-2020 bushfires have been re assessed for use and waivers have been agreed to again for certain areas, please check your sites as you may be able to receive a waiver again. Apiarists who have sites within Red Zones may be able to get a waiver as well. Cycle ways within State Forests have been an issue in many of forests this year. Although we cannot stop other stakeholders from using the forests, we have been voicing our views and these are being heard. Resources are always raised whenever we can with Government and authorising bodies as this is one of our main issues affecting beekeeping.



Biosecurity: Besides *Varroa destructor*, we have had meetings with DPI around our old adversary AFB. Apiarists are reminded that they need to submit their honey for culture tests. This is a requirement of the code and very few have been submitted. Alcohol washing is now part of everyday beekeeping, which must be done every 16 weeks and results reported to DPI. We must also do Declarations for moving hives in the Blue Zone and a Permit is required Purple and Red Zones Movements.

Honeyland was on again at Sydney Royal Easter Show this year and Debbie and Mal Porter put in a tremendous effort to make this happen without drama. A big thank you must be given to them both as they do this for our Association and industry unselfishly. I would also like to thank everybody who donated honey and product for Honeyland. Volunteers must also be thanked whole heartily for their effort as well. Without Debbie, Mal, donations and volunteers this would not be possible. Thank you once again.

I would also like to send out a big thank you to Candice Clifford for the effort she has made whilst being only new to the job of State Secretary/Treasurer. This has been a mammoth task, making sure that the Association run as smooth as possible in a difficult year.

HoneyBee News has once again shone because of the effort Vikki Bingley puts into it, thank you Vikki.

The NSWAA Executive Council has been busy all year, mainly with *Varroa destructor*, but also with ongoing work achieving goals previously set out and new ones arising. Without them I could not have done what I have this year and their support doesn't go unrecognised by any means, thank you seems insufficient.

To all members, you are the backbone of our Association and without you all we would not be as strong as we are. Remember, united we stand, divided we fall! Your support is appreciated, and this gives us a voice to deal with Government.

Thank you and happy honey harvesting!



Victorian Apiarists' Association Annual Report

John van Weeghel, President

The year. Most will agree that the last twelve months have been somewhat different. Varroa, cold and wet spring, floods, needing to feed bees but, after all this most finished with some good honey crops and bees going into winter in good condition. It was pleasing to see that when conditions improved, optimism and smiles on faces returned.

Varroa. It was a little over one month after our last Annual General Meeting that we received the news that varroa was found in the port of Newcastle in NSW. This was bad news, but worse came some days later when we received the news that varroa was found in several apiaries. Fortunately, a group of dedicated people stood up to the little blighters and here we are twelve months later, well on the way to eradication. Total eradication will take some years, but the association believes that it can be achieved. Thank you to all that have contributed to the effort including DPI, AHBIC and the many volunteers from across the country.

Resources Committee. The Resources Committee continues to look after the interest of all beekeepers that use bee sites on Public Land. Getting our message through to the Land Managers is an ongoing effort. With logging of native forest coming to an end and Management Plans up for review the industry will rely on the work of the Resources Committee to represent our interest. Please support this dedicated group by attending resources meetings and contact them if you need assistance.

Board training. As for the Association, we started with most members of the Board attending a 'Board Effectiveness training' in Sydney, provided by the Wheen Bee Foundation, funded from the Linton Briggs Advancing Apiculture Fund. Much valuable information was received and the implementation of this is a work in progress.

Melbourne Royal Show. For the association to be back at the Melbourne Royal Show was fantastic. The show gives us the opportunity to interact with the public face to face, it's simply the best way to promote beekeeping and all our products. Loyal customers were all smiles when they located our stand and could once again buy honey from the beekeeper's association. It was a great team effort by all, thank you to our volunteers, some of them travelling long distances to get to the show.

Membership. The membership of our association remains steady, with some members not renewing their membership, but we see new members joining at the same rate. One section of our membership that has seen an increase, is the group of Affiliated Association's. It was very pleasing to welcome these new groups.

Beekeeper training. For some years the association and industry have discussed the need for a Certificate III in beekeeping to be available in Victoria. This will now be achieved with Polytechnic introducing this course. On top of this AgVic has introduced Resilience Training, together these two will offer the Victorian beekeepers an excellent opportunity to get professional training. Several of our members have been involved with the development of these courses under the leadership of one of our Board members, Phillip McPherson. Thank you, Phil and team.



Museum. Members who have joined our association over recent years may not be aware that the association is the owner of a small building known as the Victorian Beekeepers Museum. It is located behind the old Huntly Shire Office, at Huntly. The site is managed by the Huntly and District Historic Society. Before COVID the site was at times open to the public and school groups. We are re-engaging with the Huntly Historic Society and hope to get some of our members to assist in opening the museum once again. It will let us put on show the history of beekeeping and our association.

Regional BBQ meetings. The association has been planning to have several BBQ meetings across country Victoria. The first of these meetings was held on Friday 26th of May, with others in the planning for July. The meeting was enjoyed by all present and gave everyone the chance to have a discussion on a range of topics. It was agreed that we should have these meetings on a regular basis.

Australian Bee Journal. After surviving with an E-copy for three years, the Australian Bee Journal is back in print, but only for the members that request to receive the journal in print. For several years, a considerable proportion of our membership have indicated they would prefer to receive an E-copy. I have been informed that the discussions on printed versus E-copy go back eight years. It was an opportune time to implement the change and let the individual members make their choice.

Way forward. After a few challenging years the Board is looking forward to the future. With the return of our major fund raisers, the Melbourne Royal Show, the Annual Conference, and the return of a printed journal we will have the capacity to introduce new initiatives that will benefit our membership. For the association to move forward we need to improve our financial position, this will enable the association to employ more staff or a CEO. Financial plans will be developed at the same time as the Strategic Plan. Ian Hunt has made himself available to finish the review that commenced prior to COVID.

Thank you to:

- our contractors, Kerrin Williams and Annette Engstrom for the great job they do,
- all volunteers, they are the backbone of the association, many working in the shadows for the benefit of all members,
- our sponsors and advertisers for their continued support, and
- the Affiliated Groups and all Members of the association.



Queensland Beekeepers' Association Inc Annual Report

Jacob Stevens, President

2022/2023 has been a challenging year for the QBA.

At the 2022 conference, I announced what we had all hoped would never happen and that Varroa Destructor was detected in Australia. Little did we know how significant this incursion would be for our industry, border closures, market implications and devastating impacts on fellow beekeepers in the affected zones. Nevertheless, I am proud of how the QBA has supported the national response and the Queensland beekeeping industry through this difficult time. The job still needs to be completed, but if we continue to work together, I am hopeful we will be able to win the fight.

The other central area of focus for the QBA this year has been resources. The Nature conservation act amendment was debated and passed by parliament. Whilst it has yet to be signed off in legislation, we have continued to work with the Department of Environment and Science to deliver the extension. We finally met with Minister Scanlon after almost 30 requests. We have also commenced working with the Department of Agricultural, which has been tasked with finding alternative resources over the next 20 years.

The QBA board effectiveness project has also been a critical area of focus this year. While Varroa and Resources have increased the workload, significant progress has been made in this area. This work is continuing, and it is hoped that it will help better manage the workload of the management committee and set the QBA up for a successful and sustainable future. BICC met in late 2022, with the first 2023 meeting postponed due to the current inter-departmental works. We have also had several meetings with Dominic McGann concerning Native Title; this will be a crucial area for the remainder of 2023.

The 2022 EKKA went ahead after a 2-year covid hiatus. Under the careful eye of Adrian Jones, shadowed by the Incoming EKKA coordinator Chris Kassebaum the stand ran and performed exceptionally well. Thank you to all the volunteers and donors for making the stall so successful, and a special thanks to Adrien Jones for his years of service as the EKKA coordinator.

The new QBA website was finally launched in late 2022; this has been a big project and a long time in the making. Thanks to Marion Weatherhead for her stewardship of the QBA website for many years and her feedback on the new website before it was published.



The QBA has also continued to advocate for Queensland beekeepers nationally. The QBA has worked hard to make representation to AHBIC over the past year on many issues, including supporting AHBIC varroa members and public updates, as well as participating in discussions around borders and protecting the Queensland Beekeeping Industry. We thank AHBIC for their tireless work during the past 12 months.

I want to thank our members for their continued support this year. I want to pay particular thanks to our branch executives, management committee, Jo, Elise and Steph. Also, thanks to Murray Arkadieff, Ken Bannister and Brad Jensen for their service to the QBA management committee, and I wish them all the best for the future.



Tasmanian Beekeepers Association

Lindsay Bourke, President

The Tasmanian Beekeepers Association is going from strength to strength.

In 2023 only 3% of Tasmanian beehives are owned by people who are not members of, nor affiliated with the Tasmanian Beekeepers Association.

In the south of the state commercial beekeepers have come together to form a new group they have named 'Commercial Beekeepers Southern Tasmania Inc'. This new group is now a part of the TBA and has full voting rights.

The Tasmanian Beekeepers Association is the most stable beekeeping organisation in Australia having had the same president and secretary for the past twelve years.

Poor season

Unfortunately reports of this year's honey harvest mark it out as being a poor season. A very disappointing result for most beekeepers who have reported they are mostly down 30% on an average season. The weather is to blame for this lack of nectar. Spring and early summer were

wet when the bees should have been building up. Just to be contrary, when the bees were on the West Coast for the honey flow, the weather was quite the opposite - the driest we have ever seen it. Many of the Leatherwoods didn't even flower.

Varroa destructor

The incursion of Varroa destructor in New South Wales has resulted in Tasmanian beekeepers being unable to buy queen bees to replace their old queens and to make new splits. As a result some beekeepers have had less hives this year than in past years.

NSW DPI has done an excellent job of containing the Varroa destructor incursion. Sadly, as a result of the incursion 17,000 beehives have had to be destroyed. The beekeepers involved were fully reimbursed for their losses.



Small hive beetle

Tasmania has been put on full alert with the discovery of one single small hive beetle in a sentinel hive located at Devonport. A 15km restricted zone was created around the site where the beetle was found. There were around a thousand beehives within the zone; all of which were inspected by Biosecurity staff.



Photo: Hives in the restricted zone inspected and taped up by Biosecurity.

Apithor hive beetle traps were inserted into many of the hives and removed initially within a two week period to check for more beetles. More traps were then inserted and left for longer periods before being removed. Inspected hives were taped up at the end of each inspection.

Thanks to Tasmanian DPI and everybody involved: a job well done.



The following link is to a totally untruthful video concerning Manuka honey.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=paRtRTjkGp>



South Australian Apiarists' Association Report

Leigh Duffield, President

It gives me pleasure to present this President's Report - I took on the presidency for the five months until our conference/AGM, after Carolyn Smith stepped down from her role within the Executive Council earlier in the year due to family reasons. This is not my first time at the helm of the Association as I have been President in 1988-89 and again in 1997.

Over the past few months, we have been engaging with PIRSA to improve the flow of communication between the industry and government. This will be an ongoing exercise as there is no quick fix to many of the issues that have been surfacing from the industry which need to be addressed. We are working with PIRSA to develop a preparedness management plan for Varroa. The aim is one which meets the needs of SA apiarists and considers the needs of those pollination industries also affected if Varroa takes hold. We are currently advocating the border between NSW and our state remain closed, to allow SA apiarists some level of security over moving bees onto almond pollination this season. This is a delicate matter which is being monitored closely as we work with the Beekeeping Society of SA and the Almond Board to ensure that the needs of the almond industry are considered alongside ours. We have met with the Primary Industries minister, the Honourable Clare Scriven, and other management personnel within PIRSA, working to further strengthen the flow of information both ways.

It has been acknowledged that the industry is highly concerned over the burgeoning workload of the Apiary Unit in PIRSA and the subsequent loss of effectiveness perceived by the industry. This is another delicate situation where we are approaching the matter from a positive viewpoint of how the industry can work together with PIRSA to ensure that our needs are met. At this early stage we are hopeful that our efforts will result in a stronger industry within SA which is supported by PIRSA, however this will be something that all apiarists will need to take on board and work together to achieve something we can be proud of as a state. Unfortunately, we are again without a Bee Biosecurity Officer with the previous BBO Samantha Grund moving onto another role within PIRSA.

Varroa Awareness Day – Loxton August 2022

The SAAA ran a varroa awareness day during the almond season at Loxton. Guest speakers from New Zealand, New South Wales as well as the biosecurity section of PIRSA presented very informative presentations. While the information was very practical and up to date it is obvious that much more must be done in order to prepare the Apiculture and pollination industries should varroa become endemic in Australia.

Varroa mite

Currently SA is totally unprepared for varroa mite. One of the plant health objectives is to ensure that industry and dependant industries are prepared to quickly adapt to control and management programs which will support viable industries PIRSA has made contact with SAAA and a meeting is to take place just prior to conference. Hopefully we will be able to advance this important issue to ensure that SA will be ready when the time arises.



Access to native vegetation

At the turn of the century Apiarists had access to 39 parks with approximately 460 sites, Water reserves 144 sites, forestry an unknown number of sites plus heritage country. The total site number of 800 good sites capable of carrying a commercial load of bees when conditions were available. We now have approximately 160, not all in a condition which will support commercial loads as well as the indigenous pollinators.

A review of site access was conducted last season chaired by the chief executive of PIRSA. Industry was poorly represented on the committee consequently what we considered a very bias and ill-informed report was presented. Negotiations are currently taking place to try and correct the decisions with well informed and substantiated evidence as the guide.

Last July five executive members joined with Professor David Paton in Ngarkat where he has monitored the environment spanning 35 years. A very interesting and informative couple of days.

Honey Quality Standard

150 years ago the then SA apiary group lobbied the South Australian Government to introduce a quality standard for the state produced apiary products.

This was intended to give SA beekeepers an advantage over other states in the British market. Two years later they had it gazetted and it actually worked to the evolving industry benefit. In May 2008 The More than Honey Report recommendation 20 states “

“The committee recommends that the Australian Government develop product standards for honey and other bee products with regard to food standards and chemical contamination in line with those in force in the European Union, and that all imported honey products are tested against this standard”

Currently our standard is

- Less than 21% moisture
- Greater than 65% reducing sugars.

Tested against this standard I would suggest that a can of dehydrated Coca Cola could meet that standard. Until we implement recommendation 20 or better still review the current requirements for quality standards we are wasting our time asking the Government to test honey to our less than adequate standard. SAAA moved a motion at our Berri conference in 2021 to request AHBIC to move in that direction. Until this occurs, we as quality food producers will always only be price takers, competing with honey or look alike honey which can't be accepted in any other country with a superior quality standard.



Sentinel sniffer dogs @ Adelaide Airport

The SAAA initiated work with AQIS to reengage and support the work of the Sentinel Sniffer Dogs working at the Adelaide Airport. Training on the detection of bees has been happening over that time and initial reports show that this is going well with an ongoing relationship with the Association moving forward. These dogs are used to detect the importation of genetic material which could be detrimental to the apiary industry. This is another example of how little things can assist all beekeepers to maintain the integrity of our industry and ensure that biosecurity is not compromised by contaminated imports.

To better control pests and diseases, we must work toward creating a unified industry. Cooperation between regions of apiarists will be much more cost effective in eliminating AFB and treating for Varroa control. Should Varroa become endemic the kill rate of colonies could be up to 50% in the first couple of years. How do we manage the derelict material of that order when we can't manage the current situation?

The whole industry must show a united front when dealing with the access to native vegetation issues. The lack of access will compound the overstocking situation recently identified by AgriFutures surveys. Dissemination of scientific papers published both national and international need to be circulated throughout the industry. Even if only 15% of apiarists adopt new practices the rest through necessity will follow. The issue of quality standards as outlined earlier must be addressed. With Varroa now looking like a problem we should also progress toward developing and adopting an import risk assessment for Australia. The future for industry prosperity is only as promising as the effort we put into it to make it happen. Do we want to have a voice in how our industry moves forward or do we want this forced upon us by others? Is it time to think and act yet?



Bee Industry Council of Western Australia

BICWA has been experiencing significant growth and activity in the past year. We are delighted to have an Operational Manager, Dr Liz Barbour, who shares our vision for establishing a professional peak body that represents the Western Australian (WA) beekeeping community. We are delivering as the peak body for the WA industry but as a volunteer-based organisation that relies heavily on grant funding and volunteer contributions, we have challenges. However, our primary objective is to organise BICWA in a way that best meets the needs of the local beekeeping community and delivers on our new Industry Strategic plan (2022-2027).

The beekeeping season in WA has been quite unusual, with a promising beginning, a prolonged and dry summer, and an average honey yield at the end. Nevertheless, due to some well-timed rainfall followed by weeks of sunshine, we observed an increase in honey production towards the end of the season and a growth in live bee export.

Our top priority is maintaining biosecurity measures and implementing strong barriers to prevent incursions and other biosecurity risks. Moreover, we are committed to helping fellow beekeepers in the eastern states. Our volunteers are actively supporting the NSW Varroa eradication grounds team, while we are expanding our queen bee breeding program to ensure a steady supply. We sincerely appreciate beekeeper efforts in the eastern states for their steadfast commitment.

As with all states, we are diligently working towards improving our Varroa surveillance and hive tracking. We are open to collaboration and taking proactive measures to ensure success. Timely is the review of our Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007 which heralds major changes in biosecurity management and cost-sharing in the future.

We have dedicated a considerable amount of time and effort towards participating in the Forest Management Plan 2024-33. Our priority is to ensure that beekeepers are acknowledged and included, while also advocating for the preservation and safeguarding of our forests. We strongly believe that implementing effective rehabilitation programs is essential to preserve these invaluable resources for future generations. Our engagement advocates for the prevention of further damage, particularly through measures like reducing the extensive use of prescribed burning, which has a significant economic impact on beekeepers and our forests.

As we persist in our efforts to expose cases of low-cost imported honey, the newly formed Imported Honey subcommittee within AHBIC is essential to build international awareness. Whilst we are educating domestic customers to make informed choices, we are also working to protect our high-value honey. Our focus is on certification and traceability programs and our commitment lies in the creation of testing systems that contribute to the Australian Honey Library and ensure global recognition for our top-quality honey products. Though still in the initial stages, our accomplishments have earned us worldwide recognition. It's important to note that the Australian honey story is a collective effort in the international markets.



To sum up, BICWA has had a productive and thriving year with promising plans for the future. As the leading organisation for beekeepers in WA, we are dedicated to ensuring financial stability, promoting biosecurity, protecting our valuable resources, and providing unwavering support to our fellow beekeepers. Furthermore, we are resolute in our efforts to preserve the superior quality of our product, educate consumers and implement certification and traceability programs. We are immensely proud of our accomplishments thus far and eagerly anticipate continued growth and triumph as we collaborate with each state to strengthen the Australian honey industry.

Here are a few snapshots of our Industry year 2022/23:

Current board members:

Brendon Fewster
David Routley
John McLoughlin
Julie Dinsdale
Heidi Spicer
Kim Fewster
Mathew Welch
Mikey Cernotta
Shane McLinden

Chair
Director
Director
Director
Director
Director
Director
Vice-Chair
Director

Office term ends:

2025
2025
2023
2023 / Independent Director
2023 / Independent Director
2023 / Independent Director
2024
2024
2023

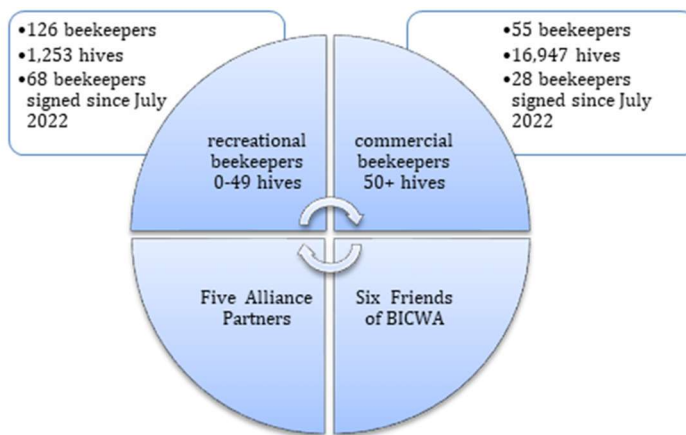
Liz Barbour Operational Manager
Christine Spycher Secretary
Gary Richards Treasurer

The BICWA Annual General Meeting 2023 is planned for Friday, 27th October.

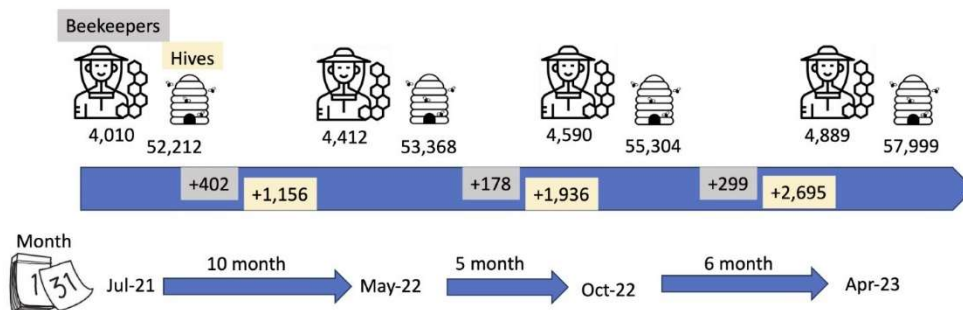
The next Conference is on Saturday, 15th July 2023 at Claremont Showground, Perth, Western Australia.



BICWA membership July 2022 – May 2023



WA registered beekeepers and hives with the Department for Primary Industries and Regional Development (DPIRD)





**Amateur Beekeepers Association of NSW Inc,
trading as Amateur Beekeepers Australia
Vincent Schnyder, Secretary & Treasurer**



In the 2022/23 membership year the ABA supported the establishment of two new clubs in the Macleay Valley and Tamworth which brings the total number of affiliated clubs to 35 with one interstate club currently in discussion to affiliate with the ABA in the next membership year. By providing beekeeping technical advice, membership fee collection, insurance, IT platform and governance support to affiliated clubs, the ABA can remove countless hours of work from the affiliated clubs committees so they can focus on providing support to their members. In addition, the costs of running the organisations, especially insurance and IT support, can be considerably reduced to provide members and clubs a cost effective way to participate in beekeeping clubs.

The number of members slightly dropped to around 4,200 which after the growth over the last few years (especially during COVID) and the uncertainty in relation to the impact of Varroa mite detection in the Hunter and Central Coast region is not unexpected. Supporting clubs in the Varroa Emergency Eradication zone, mainly the Central Coast and Hunter Valley clubs but also other clubs with members in the Red Zone, will be a key focus of the ABA in the coming years as the impact on these clubs is hard to predict and support will be required.

With members from Bega to the Gold Coast and Albury to Orana as well as Alice Springs, the ABA held the first hybrid face-to-face and online AGM in Orange. The meeting demonstrated that with some restrictions for online participants, such hybrid meetings are feasible. In late April 2023 the ABA held the first Field Day since COVID which was well attended and demonstrated the interest of members in further training and education. As a result, the ABA is considering holding regional field days to ensure that members across all clubs have the opportunity to attend such meetings.



HONEY PACKERS and MARKETERS ASSOCIATION OF AUSTRALIA Inc.

Ben McKee, President



This year has seen honey production at average to above average levels, relative to recent crops since the decline of Salvation Jane in the environment. Yet again this year we have seen packers having access to ample honey stocks, with inventory of Australian honey continuing to grow in many instances.

Whilst early days, the FY22/23 is looking to be another good crop based on the budding of key flowering trees, weather permitting. However, the long-range weather forecast predicts a warmer, drier summer for Australia, with less rainfall if the El Nino arrives as predicted by the Bureau of Meteorology. History suggests that we are due again for the impacts of weather to impact the honey crop, especially on the basis that we have had three consecutive good production seasons.

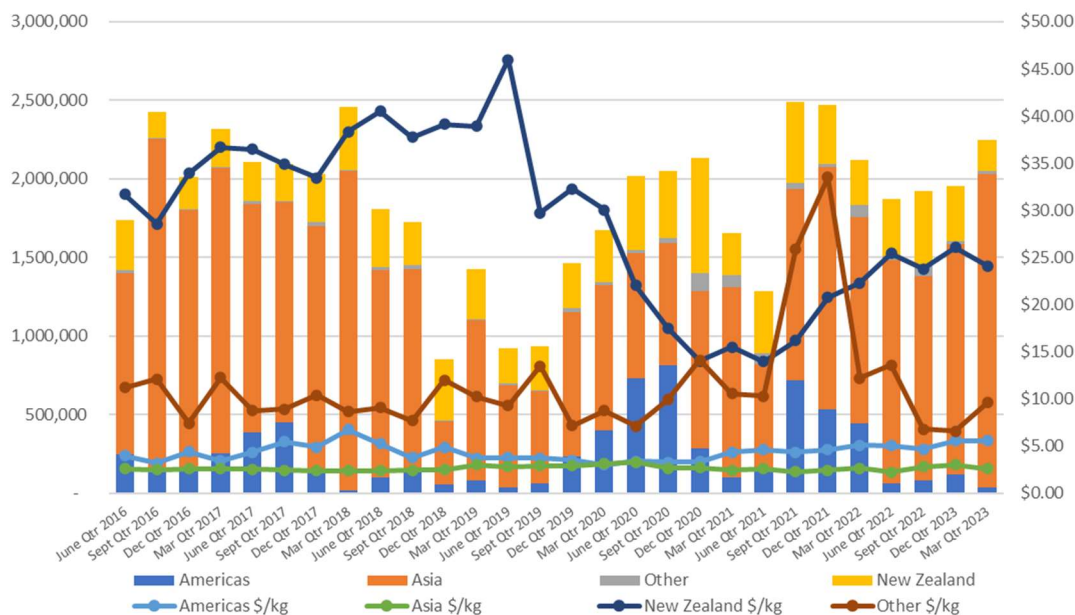
The return of tourists, students and travel has created some business opportunities for Australian packers of premium honeys, such as Manuka. Geopolitical tensions with China that have been problematic for honey sales seem to have eased somewhat, with packers reporting less issues with clearing shipments from China customs. Hopefully this will continue, as China has historically been the biggest export market for Australian honey.

Increased honey supply has seen Australian honey prices further reduce the from record high levels of the drought. Lower Australian honey prices has seen a return to higher levels of promotion and discounting for Australian retail honeys, making them more competitive. It is good that this better competitive position has seen the welcomed reduction in the market penetration of New Zealand packed table honeys. Imported honeys packed here in Australia continues to offer increased value for consumers and dominates the value segment.

During 2022/23, we have seen imports continue from the Americas, Asia and New Zealand (as illustrated in the graph below), as has historically been the case. It should be noted that during the last financial year we have seen a notable quantity of the imported honey re-exported to large industrial customers in Asia. The source of many of the large bulk honey shipments from Australia has changed from South America to Asia, as illustrated in the export figures this year.



Honey Imports (kg) Over Time by Quarter (2016 – 2023):



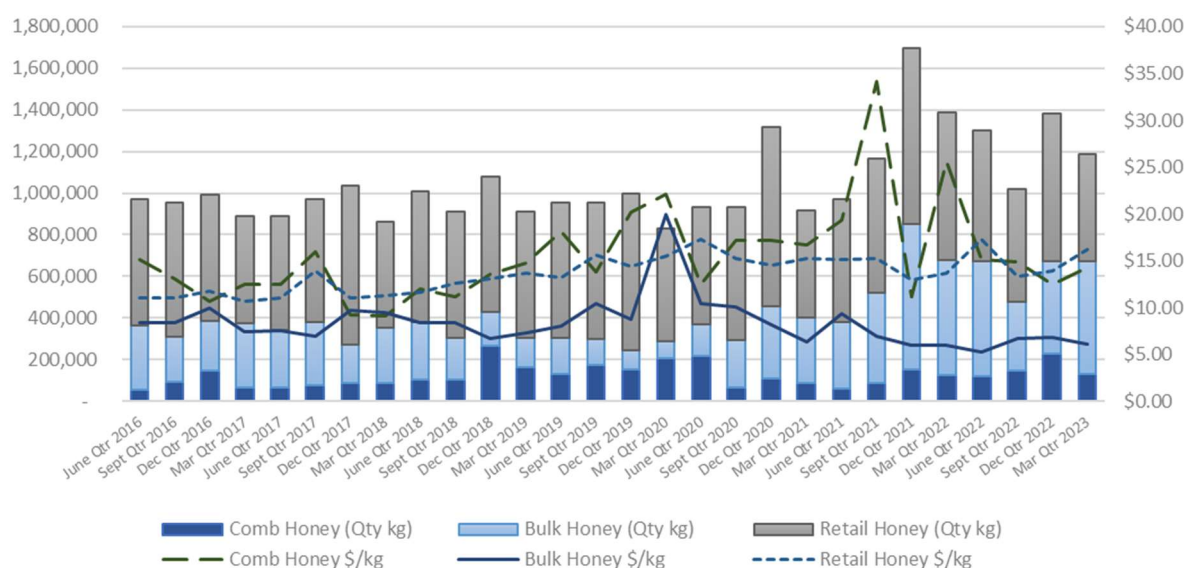
Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

Pleasingly, we have seen continued good export volumes of honey from Australia. In recent times, bulk honey exports from Australia have increased, which does include blended honey for specific markets.

The retention and growth of export markets for Australian honey is crucial to the industry's prosperity, especially as we produce greater volumes of honey. In the last 12 months, over 4,887 tonnes of honey and comb was exported from Australia at a value of over \$56 million dollars. The major retail export markets remain North America, China, Japan and South-East Asia. The cost of and availability of shipping vessels and shipping containers is back to normal, post the COVID induced complications of the last few years.



Honey Exports (kg) Over Time by Quarter (2016 – 2023):



Source: Australian Bureau of Statistics

The Australian retail supermarket and pharmacy segment remains just in annual value growth at +1.2%, with a total market size of over \$170m (Source: IRI Data MTD to 05/06/23). The increase in category value can be attributed to rises in value brands and the premium health and wellness segment. Pharmacy honey sales have grown notably this year at over 39% as premium honey buyers return, following a decline in previous COVID impacted years.

In terms of volume, the picture for the Australian retail supermarket segment remains positive, with the category also in slight growth at +1.5% to an annual total of 10,351t, which is up 156t (Source: IRI Data MAT to 05/06/23). Volume growth is again outperforming value growth, with price the main driver with increased discounting and value brands in the category. This is in addition to the return of better volumes from the health and wellness segment.

It has been pleasing to witness the success of the Australian Manuka Honey Association (AMHA) in maintaining international market access for Australian beekeepers producing Manuka honey. HPMAA is a proud member of the AMHA. It was great to see the AMHA effectively oppose the New Zealand industry's trademark efforts in both the UK and NZ, with the judgements in both jurisdictions a solid legal victory following complex and long-running proceedings. It is also satisfying to see that there has been no appeal in either jurisdiction, hopefully we will see more collaboration with our New Zealand friends in the future.

AHBIC's work on the Varroa mite incursion on behalf of industry has been much appreciated and we feel for those beekeepers whose businesses have been adversely impacted. AHBIC continues to rely heavily on the financial support of only a minority of industry participants, so we would encourage all to continue to support their work.

The packers and marketers of the HPMAA continue to work hard to ensure Australian beekeepers get the best return for their quality honey, and we are proud to market a wonderful, sustainable, natural product.



Australian Queen Bee Breeders Association

The management committee of the AQBBA this year, consisted of Richard Sims as President, Stefan Lottering as Vice President, Peter Czeti as Secretary, David Briggs as Treasurer. Paul Reid, Corinne Jordan, Terry Brown and Jamie Baggs served as general committee members. During the year Peter Czeti also took over as Treasurer from David Briggs with David remaining as a general committee member.

In 2022-2023 the AQBBA management committee focused on how best to support our members as the Varroa Emergency Response rolled out in NSW. AQBBA continued to support the Plan Bee Queen Breeding Project. We continued to channel regular communication and educational material to benefit members through our website, Facebook pages and newsletters.

Varroa Emergency Response

We advocated for compensation for Queen Bee Breeders affected by the Varroa response and recommended a protocol to safeguard valuable breeder queens. We also proposed improvements to future Varroa surveillance methods.

To better educate members, AQBBA invited guest speakers to provide webinars specifically dealing with aspects of Varroa related to queen bee producers from overseas experts. Examples of some of the webinars hosted by AQBBA include:

- Randy Oliver USA – provided a detailed overview of managing Varroa in a queen breeding operation.
- Rae Butler from New Zealand described how she selects for and breeds for Varroa Sensitive Hygiene in New Zealand
- Dr Kaira Wagoner, USA briefed us on her pioneering approach to breed for Varroa resistance without an active mite population.

The AQBBA also kept members abreast of changes impacting the transport of queen bees during the Varroa Emergency Response by maintaining updates on our website, Facebook pages and via our newsletter.

B-QUAL and B-TRACE Queen Bee Quality Standards

The Queen Bee Quality Standard framework was sent for final comment and feedback to AHBIC last year. The suggestions and changes have now been incorporated into the standards. These standards have now been endorsed by the quality assurance board and an extension of B-Qual and B-Trace manuals are currently being drafted with the new inclusions.

Plan Bee

AQBBA is continuing in our advisory and support role. Several of our members and committee provided data and samples for genetic testing during the year and actively engaged in Plan Bee workshops. We continue to promote Plan Bee events, share information with members and facilitate opportunities for education around estimated breeding values (EBV), collection of data and evaluation of traits as Plan Bee moves into the final stages of the project.



Website/Facebook

The aqbba.org.au website is regularly updated with relevant material for members and we continue to maintain the Facebook page as a primary means for general communication and engagement.

Future Projects

The AQBBA is actively developing proposals and supporting the following projects:

- Assisting with the expected transition of Plan Bee to a post project, ongoing business as usual arrangement.
- Introduction of a new membership class within the AQBBA for certified queen producers that have completed the B-QUAL and B-TRACE programs.
- Exploring options for the import of drone semen from overseas certified varroa sensitive hygiene (VSH) sources and procedures to clear quarantine and distribute these resources to queen bee breeders in Australia.
- Increased engagement with research and development (R&D) and academic initiatives that are relevant to queen bee and colony genetics improvement – particularly post Plan Bee.
- Improving engagement with our membership and the addition of services and resources that assist them with improving the quality and range of their queen bee breeding and production operations.



Crop Pollination Association of Australia Inc.

Unfortunately, still due to Covid and now also the impact of containing the varroa outbreak in NSW, little activity has been shown by the association.

However, we have continued our commitment to industry involvement by:

- Presence at the 2022 Congress
- Individuals' memberships within other associations such as Protected Cropping Australia, B-QUAL, Amateur Beekeepers Association, state associations e.g., NSWAA, QBA.
- Good working relationship with current research bodies such as AgriFutures, Hort Innovations and various universities with members actively involved in providing advice, hives and sites for research
- Researching pollination by native species
- Port surveillance program
- Continuation of financial membership of the Pollinator Stewardship Council of USA.
- Informal mentoring

Again, this year our members have been heavily involved in the pollination of the following crops: almonds, blueberries, macadamias, avocados, apples, raspberries, blackberries and others.



B-QUAL and B-TRACE Annual Report

Wayne Fuller, Chairman

It is my pleasure to once again submit the B-QUAL/B-TRACE report to the AHBIC members for 2022/2023.

It has been a very successful year for our company with a substantial increase in membership to both levels of accreditation and the increasing overall industry participation and recognition.

In the first quarter of 2022 The Board introduced a small enterprise on line desk audit accreditation scheme B-TRACE for enterprises operating 100 hives or less. The scheme is primarily aimed at those new entrants into the industry, or larger recreational beekeepers, to have recognised industry certification, encourage record keeping through the B-TRACE web app, and as their enterprises grow they could move into B-QUAL. A web site www.btrace.com.au was established and membership has grown steadily over the year. Safe Food Australia a well-established HACCP and audit company were appointed to manage the B-TRACE desk audit process.

Early 2022 upon notification from AUS-QUAL of significant cost increases in both administration and audit charges the Board undertook a comprehensive review of the entire B-QUAL business. The outcome of that review lead to a decision by the Board to assume full self-administration of B-QUAL and putting in place a tender process of selected audit companies for audit services for 3 years.

This move was made with recognition by the Board that any changes made must be to the overall benefit of members in both cost advantage and audit services.

After a full and comprehensive tender process it was decided that we would appoint Safe Food Australia as our audit managers and the appointment was finalised on 1st August 2022. This also had an overall company advantage that SFA were already our audit company for B-TRACE.

SFA hit the ground running and by October had all outstanding audits completed and had in place an audit management program which has streamlined our data bases and we believe improved client services.

Feedback from members has been very encouraging and in the whole has meet with overall member satisfaction for quality of audit and audit service.

It should be noted that although we changed auditors to manage the impending cost rises; audit costs in all industries have increased and we are working closely with SFA to reduce costs wherever possible.

We have now conducted some remote audits and members are encouraged by this move; decreasing the cost of audit by eliminating travel and other expenses. It is envisaged that every second audit at least can be done remotely so this will be a significant decrease in member's costs in coming years.

The assumption of administration services by the Directors has resulted in administration cost savings and those additional funds have been allocated into honey testing and continually building on the Honey chemistry data base started with the Federal Government grant of 2021/2022.

We are also able to offer limited CODEX and HPTLC honey testing to our members and it is our intention to keep building on that service for our member's benefits.

During the year we entered into agreement with Organic Food Chain Australia to conduct organic audits.



We have also during the year released a new website and invite you to visit to keep updated on news and events, and have included a login private members section. www.bqual.com.au
Over the last year B-QUAL has been recognised as an major industry partner and is now included on a number of Industry and associated committees including: Standards Australia honey products review committee, GS1 NGTAG traceability steering committee, and various industry committees such as Anti-Dumping, and educational committees.

With a service such as that which we offer, feedback from B-QUAL and B-TRACE members is important. We are continually working at improving our communication with members not only by the quarterly newsletter but also by direct email messaging and we strongly encourage all members to email their concerns and/or suggestions. B-QUAL is your company and we appreciate feedback, good or bad as a means for us to improve in those areas that you want.

I must thank Safe Food Australia for their input into the audit services and I acknowledge their hard work and dedication.

Lastly none of the success we have had would be possible without the hard work dedication and long hours by the Directors who have melded into a great team all aimed at the success of B-QUAL and B-TRACE. I thank them sincerely for their efforts.



Apimondia Oceania Presidents Report

Jodie Goldsworthy - Apimondia Oceania President

Looking forward to Apimondia in Chile - 4th - 8th September 2023 - Santiago

The world's beekeepers are looking forward to converging on the capital of Chile in just over 2 months' time. The theme of this year's congress is "Sustainable Beekeeping". Sustainability and viability of beekeepers is a global issue and the program is packed with topics that advance knowledge and understanding and help beekeepers tackle difficult issues that impact their businesses.

The setting should be incredible with the snow capped Andes mountains as a backdrop to the city of Santiago and an opportunity to take technical tours which showcase Latin American beekeeping. Chile is home to around 9500 beekeepers who manage 1,353,300 hives with 50% of their honey derived from native flora.

The program has been selected from a massive 870 abstracts and evaluated thoroughly in order to bring forward the highest quality Scientific program.

The Apiexpo is always a favorite with beekeepers where they can see new inventions, beekeeping technology and equipment from around 140 exhibitors from all around the world.

More information: www.apimondia2023.com

Start planning for 2025 in Scandinavia

Scandinavia (made up of a joint bid from Denmark, Sweden and Norway) is set to host Apimondia in 2025 in the wonderful city of Copenhagen, Denmark. We can look forward to Nordic hospitality and displays of Viking beekeeping history when we visit Santiago this year and see the showcase begin from Scandinavia as they promote the 2025 Congress.

Food & Agriculture Organisation (FAO) & Apimondia Memorandum of Understanding Joint Work

FAO, WOA (World Organisation of Animal Health), Apimondia, IZSLT (Istituto Zooprofilattico Sperimentale del Lazio e della Toscana), FAO Reference Centre "Animal Health and Food Security Discipline Apiculture, health and biosecurity" and WOA Collaborating Centre "Good Beekeeping Management Practices and Biosecurity Measures in the Apiculture Sector" co-organised the second international symposium on biosecurity in beekeeping on 18 May 2023, facilitating the participation of beekeeping stakeholders as well as the keynote speakers by using WEBEX.

Subjects which were progressed included:

- Improving biosecurity in beekeeping through FAO Progressive Management Pathway approach
- Sustainable control of honey bee bacterial diseases using bacteriophages
- Use of organic methods to fight varroa mite
- Identification and sustainable management of some honey bee diseases and pests in Africa



Apimondia continues to work with FAO on other projects which are largely focused on helping build beekeeping knowledge and capacity particularly in developing countries. Many volunteer hours have been invested by members of the Apimondia Executive particularly in South America, Africa and Asia with joint work occurring between the Scientific Presidents and the Regional Presidents to deliver programs in association with FAO.

News in Bee Health Commission from Bee Health Scientific President Dr Fani Hatjina - Helping to gain global knowledge on Varroa

Citizen Science has become very popular over the past decade, mainly because even a small group of volunteers can contribute to large amounts of data, increase scientific knowledge and raise people's awareness. Citizen Scientists are 'ambassadors for science'. Beekeeper Citizen Scientists participate in these studies mainly to contribute to scientific knowledge. At the same time, they learn new techniques and gain experience. To better understand how varroa is developing during the year and what are the damages to the colony's well being, a large team of researchers participating in the COLOSS Varroa Task Force initiated the study 'CSI Varroa – Citizen Scientists Initiative for Varroa Damage Thresholds' (<https://coloss.org/taskforces/varroa/>). The aim is to improve the current knowledge on varroa mite population dynamics under different conditions and to infer the infestation threshold that results in damaging overall colony performance. The 'CSI Varroa' Initiative started in 2018 and will finish later this year. It now monitors varroa levels through the seasons, in over 1250 colonies, 18 countries and five continents. Find out about the first results and the concepts in this article Citizen Scientist Initiative for Measuring Varroa Damage Thresholds: Common Efforts for Data Collection - CSI Varroa, Bee World.

Monitoring Environmental Pollutants in honeybees and hive products

Apimondia is also involved through the Bee Health Commission in the INSIGNIA-EU which is a European study on bio-monitoring of environmental pollutants using honey bees and their products. Honey bee colonies make excellent bio-samplers of biological material like nectar and pollen which they collect for food, but also for plant pathogens and non-biological material such as pesticides or airborne contamination. During the initial phase of the INSIGNIA project (which ran from 2018 - 2021), Guidelines were developed with protocols tested in nine countries, for the citizen-science-based monitoring of pesticides using honey bee colonies.

The INSIGNIA-EU project will operate for 30 months and the new sampling program will be expanded to include further forms of pollution encountered by honey bees, such as air pollutants (including polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons and volatile organic compounds), heavy metals, microplastics and fine dust / particulate matter. Pilot studies in 2022 of sampling strategies for these additional pollutants have just been completed in three countries: Austria, Denmark and Greece, and all samples have now been sent to the laboratories where analysis has almost been finished. Five factors are being studied, namely; pesticides and pollen origin as in the original project, together with the addition of microplastics (Defined as fragments of any type of plastic less than 5 mm in length, but generally used to describe microscopic fibres and fragments), heavy metals and air pollution.



In 2023, sampling for the full range of pollutants, using the most effective of these techniques, will be carried out in all 27 EU Member States. More details on the project can be found on the project website: <http://insignia-eu.eu>.

World Bee Day 2023

World Bee Day this year called for global action to support pollinator friendly agricultural production. The global World Bee Day ceremony was held in hybrid format at FAO headquarters in Rome. You can listen to President Dr Jeff Pettis speak on the day at <https://www.apimondia.org/latest>

My Apimondia President's Term ends in Chile in September

I have now served two full terms each of four years as the Oceania Region President of Apimondia and before that two years as Vice President to Maureen Conquer from New Zealand. My term is set to end in September this year and I am delighted to commend Mr John Caldeira from Fiji as my replacement for endorsement by the Apimondia members at the General Assembly to be held in Santiago.

I was honoured to be introduced to John by the previous Oceania Regional President Maureen Conquer / Maxwell. John was at the time the Secretary of the Fiji Beekeepers Association. John has been a regular attendee and supporter of the Apimondia congresses and both myself and Maureen have relied on John for his knowledge of and work with beekeepers from the Pacific Island countries as well as Fiji.

John has acted in a Co - Vice President's role for me for the last two years and has attended many of the Executive Council meetings in order to "learn the ropes" of the inner voluntary workload required as an Apimondia Executive Committee member. John has throughout this time provided constructive and positive ideas and suggestions and offered to help build and develop both Apimondia and its reach in the Oceania region.

John has been involved closely with the development of apiculture in Fiji and is willing to share his networks, ideas, and successful training and development programs with newer beekeeping nations of the Pacific Islands. I have been impressed by the work that John has done to support emerging beekeepers in Fiji and his strong communication of this work for the betterment of others.

With the focus of Apimondia on the building of apiculture worldwide and the opportunity to expand the Apimondia membership and reach I believe John will be the right person at the right time for the Oceania region. John has a good first-hand working knowledge of FAO and has been involved with the delivery of FAO programs in the past. I believe John will be a valuable asset to help progress the Apimondia FAO Memorandum of Understanding to the next level in the Oceania region and will provide excellent support to other regions involved with joint Apimondia FAO programs.

John has a strong focus on Beekeeping for Rural Development, a core Scientific theme of Apimondia and has developed good working relationships with Megan Denver the Apimondia Beekeeping for Rural Development Scientific President. I believe John will work collaboratively to support this focus area for Apimondia along with all other areas.



John has shown that he is willing to advocate for the strategic development of Apimondia to work to collectively build and develop its impact as the peak international beekeeping body. He is an excellent communicator and takes a gentle and considered approach to ensure that all views are listened to and respected.

These skills are essential in helping Apimondia progress as an organisation in a thoughtful and sustainable fashion where diplomacy needs to be well practised to ensure success and equity for all beekeepers globally.

John has an extensive grass roots network of beekeepers both in Fiji and in all other Pacific Island nations whose apiculture industries are still developing. John has built excellent working relationships with the broader Apimondia Executive Committee and the wider Apimondia family. Apimondia will be very fortunate to have John join the Executive Committee as Oceania President and members would be wise to endorse him as a candidate.

John is well positioned to support the next steps of Apimondia in a professional and supportive way.

I will continue to support John over the next two years as a Vice President and along with John and Maureen we will look to identify other suitable Vice Presidents over the next two years for both Australia and New Zealand. The role requires a willingness to work in a voluntary capacity across the range of projects, topics and tasks involved not only in organising the congress but also in supporting the wider work of Apimondia.

Thank you to New Zealand

As I write this, my last report as President I would like to sincerely thank Maureen Conquer who I have had the pleasure of working with over the last 10 years. My nominations to these roles have on each occasion been proposed by New Zealand and I thank all those who had confidence in me to make these commendations. I also thank the members of Apimondia for their votes to allow me to serve Apimondia as a volunteer and learn so much along the way. To all my fellow Apimondia Executive Committee members I have built lifelong friendships and a massive admiration and respect for all the tireless work done by each and every member.

Work still continues on the topic of Fake Honey

Whilst I will retire as Oceania President I will continue my work as a member of the Apimondia Working Group against Honey Adulteration. This group continues to be active on one of the most important issues impacting beekeeper viability globally. Apimondia believes that Honey Adulteration and the bold production of a product that imitates honey but is not, is as big of an issue as Bee Health. It requires an ongoing effort to disrupt the business models that threaten global beekeeper viability, pollination, food security and biodiversity. To witness decreasing honey prices to genuine beekeepers while large sellers of suspect products try to justify price decreases as a result of a global oversupply of honey is simply wrong. The work of this group is essential in resetting a better future for generations to come.

This work is driving change within the major markets of the Americas and Europe as standard setters and regulators quietly conduct their own work spurred through the seeds sown within this working group. Change may happen slowly but it is happening.



The recent European Union JRC Survey of honey being imported into the EU highlights the huge size of the problem and it is pleasing to note this work and the likely follow up that will result from it. In total 320 randomly sampled honey consignments were analysed. The results showed that 46% of the samples were suspicious of being non-compliant with the EU Honey Directive 2001/110/EC. The highest number of suspicious consignments originated from China.

The full report is available here <https://publications.jrc.ec.europa.eu/repository/handle/JRC130227>

My vision for a well functioning global market for our apiary products is well worth making every effort to achieve. I look forward to continuing this work with those of the highest ethics and integrity freely giving of their time to protect what underpins a high quality life for all.

Start thinking about the possibility of an Apimondia Congress in the Oceania Region

The last Apimondia Congress to be held in our region was held in 2007 in Melbourne. I encourage Australia, New Zealand and Fiji to think about the opportunities of holding an Apimondia Congress in the not too distant future. As the insecurities of the world continue to make it difficult to hold such a large congress in many parts of the world, our region offers many advantages. As our beekeepers face challenges, the injection of global beekeeping perspectives and knowledge into our beekeeping bases will be hugely beneficial for our future success.

I believe that this joint bid model submitted by the three Scandinavian beekeeping countries of Denmark, Sweden and Norway is the way of the future. This logical collaboration shares the workload and risks of hosting Apimondia and helps to bring about a stronger offer where the very best can be put forward for visiting beekeepers, scientists, NGOs and government officials. Our region is seen as being very far away by the rest of the world and the opportunity for visits to all three countries as offered by a joint bid is really worth exploring fully.

I look forward to exploring these ideas further! With thanks for contributions from Dr Fani Hatjina and Asger Sogaard.



Resources Sub-Committee Annual Report

It is an appropriate time to develop a strategy for the next ten years regarding our industry's access and utilisation of the Public Land Estate from an AHBIC perspective.

As we develop this strategy, different aspects will become increasingly important, the concepts we present, the language we use and the context in which they are presented.

The landscape is changing rapidly, the utilisation of Public Land is viewed very differently than it was twenty years ago, the system of Government, the influence of minor parties and policies that are constructed in capital cities, the phasing out of timber harvesting in some states is an example of this change.

In the process of developing and adapting our strategies, it is appropriate we review some of our key statements which have been incorporated over the last few years in various policies, ministerial reports, inquiries etc. to judge if they are still fit for purpose. The dot points are a sample of some of these statements, not always in our words but a clear reflection of the intent.

- The Victorian Government recognises the importance of the honeybee industry in helping to ensure Victorian food security, boost regional jobs and support the State's billion-dollar agricultural exports. Accordingly, DEPI seeks to encourage and support beekeeping on public land.
- Maximise co-existence or minimise conflict between apiculture and other public land uses/values.
- Multiple use management should be a core tenet of the updated RFAs and central to all forest allocation, management, and investment decisions to support, optimise and realise the highest and best use and value of forests. The term "multiple use" was taken to mean holistic and integrated approaches, not "taking turns" or compartmentalising individual uses.
- Government should adopt an integrated management matrix to reduce siloed decision-making, including having regard to the long-term impact and access implications of one activity on others.
- The renewed RFA's must recognise a fuller range of forest uses and values in order to properly balance these and their needs.
- Honeybees are a vitally important part of food production/food security. Many food crops are dependent on honeybees for pollination, the dollar value is estimated by Karasinski, was that in 2014-15 honeybee pollination was worth \$14.2 billion Australia wide. These figures would have increased significantly since 2014-15.
- Just one example is the Almond Industry, with a \$1 billion farm gate value, it is estimated that by 2025 350,000 will be required for almond pollination alone.



- If Australia is to become the food bowl of Asia and achieve targets of \$100 billion agricultural products by 2035, healthy honeybees will be a critical component.
- The beekeeping Industry is heavily dependent on the Public Land Estate floral resources for honey production and most importantly, for beehive health, prior to and after servicing the many honeybee pollination dependent food crops.
- The dependence on these Public Land Assets for Floral Resources (honey and pollen producing ecosystems) is so great that a high percentage of beekeeping business would fail without these resources. It also must be recognised that many honeybee pollination dependent business would also fail as a consequence. Greater emphasis on Integrated Forest Management that can adapt to climate change and particularly build “resilience” into the reproductive capacity of our forest ecosystems.
- The beekeeping industry is also a great custodian of our Public Land Estate because of the nature of our industry, many beekeepers spend a considerable amount of time in this landscape and are often referred to as the eyes and ears of the forest.
- The Government urgently review the current arrangements for consulting the apiculture industry regarding planned logging operations and give active consideration to amending the silvicultural prescriptions that apply to logging of mixed species forests within the ranges of licensed apiary sites, in order to improve the floral reproductive capacity of the logged forests.
- Build a shared, (all values and uses) future vision for forests and what a healthy and functional forest looks like long-term (e.g.: 100+years) and focusing particularly on being climate change adaptive and working collaboratively and consistently towards this.

In our region a group called the Gippsland Forest Dialogue has been formed, this group is a platform and process for multi-stakeholder discussions and collaboration on the most pressing local and global issues facing forests and people. The Gippsland Forest Dialogue is based on and supported by ‘The Forests Dialogue’ (TFD), an international organisation founded in 2000. TFD brings together and supports groups of forest stakeholders to learn from each other, trust each other and implement collaborative and adaptive solutions to sustainable forest management and forest conservation.

Over the past 20 years, TFD has held more than 90 dialogues on contentious issues in forest management across the globe. Each dialogue is a mix of field visits, presentations and facilitated discussions to break deadlocks and create meaningful change by determining outputs and outcomes. Over 20 major initiatives have been launched as a result.

As part of the GFD process I have been given the role to draft a policy to define “what is a healthy forest”. The first section lists a number of guiding principles and a vision, the second section sets out the basis of how decisions are formed and built and the lens we look through to guide our thought processes, the third section starts to measure and quantify what is a healthy forest in a form that is readily understood. Given the traction these forums have achieved in regard to Public Land Management it is important the industry contributes to their development in Australia.

Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc.

ABN 63 939 614 424

Audited Financial Report

for the year ended

30 April 2023

Contents

General Account:

- ❖ Statement of Income and Expenditure
- ❖ Balance Sheet

Producer Contingency Fund:

- ❖ Statement of Income and Expenditure
- ❖ Balance Sheet
- ❖ Notes to the Financial Report
- ❖ Statement by the Committee
- ❖ Independent Audit Report

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH APRIL 2023

2022

2023

INCOME

163,741.01	Voluntary Contributions		160,531.72
685.02	Interest Received		1,134.23
2,727.30	Membership Dues		272.73
6,064.55	Plant Health Australia reimbursements for Biosecurity work		66,511.93
	Grant Income		
-	Agrifutures		4,545.45
-	DAFF - Varroa Response Co-ordination	125,000.00	
	Less unspent as at 30 April	<u>88,673.53</u>	
			36,326.47
443.85	Miscellaneous Income		582.79

173,661.73

TOTAL INCOME

269,905.32

Less: EXPENDITURE

-	Advertising and Media Expenses		4,263.64
2,230.00	Audit Fees		2,250.00
1,235.71	Apimondia Membership		615.55
567.68	Bank & Eway Charges		774.88
3,343.75	Bookkeeping Fees		3,897.39
-	Congress Scholarships via Agrifutures Grant		3,604.55
-	Honey Testing		1,070.92
1,772.73	Insurance		3,095.80
500.00	Meeting Expenses		1,605.46
1,297.54	Office Supplies, IT Equipment		2,805.78
435.46	Postage		417.38
731.64	Registration, Lodgement and Permit Fees		350.00
-	Remuneration - Chairman		7,500.00
161,118.79	Remuneration - Executive Director/CEO		138,207.91
-	Remuneration - Varroa Response Coordinator		35,062.49
4,200.00	Staff Recruitment Costs		13,485.00
5,000.00	Strategic Planning Costs		7,423.28
926.95	Subscriptions/Memberships		1,313.48
100.63	Sundry Expenses		54.55
1,573.61	Telephone & Internet Costs		1,187.18
5,060.87	Travel Costs		7,526.17
909.09	WorkCover Insurance		995.40
1,025.44	Website Development & Maintenance		1,444.89
-	Grant Expenditure		

192,029.89

TOTAL EXPENDITURE

238,951.70

\$ (18,368.16)

EXCESS INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE

\$ 30,953.62

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30TH APRIL 2023

2022		2023
<u>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</u>		
319,879.96	Opening Balance 01/05/2022	301,511.80
<u>(18,368.16)</u>	Plus: Excess Income over Expenditure	<u>30,953.62</u>
<u>\$ 301,511.80</u>	Closing Balance 30/04/2023	<u>\$ 332,465.42</u>
Represented by:		
<u>CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
133,688.40	Cash at Bank	
3,418.41	Bendigo Bank Statement Account	225,564.83
-	Bendigo Bank General Working Account	1,146.85
58,312.35	Bendigo Bank Account	2,246.45
34,716.03	Bendigo Bank Term Deposit	58,668.42
83,476.51	Bendigo Bank Term Deposit 2	34,868.27
	Bendigo Bank Term Deposit 3	84,060.85
<u>313,611.70</u>		<u>406,555.67</u>
4,583.34	Other Assets	
	Sundry Debtors	39,766.05
<u>318,195.04</u>		<u>446,321.72</u>
<u>NON-CURRENT ASSETS</u>		
-	Furniture and Equipment at Cost	-
<u>-</u>	Shares in B-Qual Australia Pty Limited - see Note	<u>-</u>
<u>-</u>		<u>-</u>
318,195.04	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	446,321.72
<u>Less: CURRENT LIABILITIES</u>		
-	Trade Payables	3,845.14
2,008.77	Net GST Payable to ATO	4,050.37
-	PAYG Payable	13,088.00
-	Superannuation Payable	1,953.14
129.00	Other Payables	2,246.12
10,000.00	Accrued Expenses	-
4,545.45	Grants Received but not yet spent	88,673.53
<u>16,683.22</u>		<u>113,856.30</u>
<u>\$ 301,511.82</u>	<u>NET ASSETS</u>	<u>\$ 332,465.42</u>

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.
- PRODUCER CONTINGENCY FUND

STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30TH APRIL 2023

2022		2023
	<u>INCOME</u>	
4,286.64	Interest Received - Bank accounts	1,315.95
<hr/>		<hr/>
4,286.64	<i>TOTAL INCOME</i>	1,315.95
-	<u>Less: EXPENDITURE</u>	-
<hr/>		<hr/>
<u>\$ 4,286.64</u>	<u>EXCESS INCOME OVER EXPENDITURE</u>	<u>\$ 1,315.95</u>

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.
- PRODUCER CONTINGENCY FUND

BALANCE SHEET
AS AT 30TH APRIL 2023

2022		2023
	<u>ACCUMULATED FUNDS</u>	
479,256.54	Opening Balance 01/05/2022	483,543.18
<u>4,286.64</u>	Plus: Excess Income over Expenditure	<u>1,315.95</u>
<u>\$ 483,543.18</u>	Closing Balance 30/04/2023	<u>\$ 484,859.13</u>
Represented by:		
	<u>ASSETS</u>	
	Cash at Bank	
5.09	Bendigo Bank Working Account	5,005.47
433,498.09	Bendigo Bank Term Deposit	434,798.58
5,040.00	Bendigo Bank Term Deposit	5,055.08
<u>438,543.18</u>		<u>444,859.13</u>
45,000.00	Loan to Australian Manuka Honey Association	40,000.00
<u>483,543.18</u>	<u>TOTAL ASSETS</u>	<u>484,859.13</u>
-	<u>Less: LIABILITIES</u>	-
<u>\$ 483,543.18</u>	<u>NET ASSETS</u>	<u>\$ 484,859.13</u>

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL REPORT **FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2023**

SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

The entity is not a reporting entity because, in the Management Committee's opinion, there is unlikely to exist users of the financial report who are dependent on general purpose financial reports for information. The financial report is therefore a special purpose financial report prepared so as to comply with the reporting obligations under the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 of Western Australia.

The following is a summary of the significant accounting policies adopted by the entity in the preparation of the financial statements which, unless otherwise stated, have been consistently applied.

Accounting Basis

An accruals basis of accounting is used whereby income is recorded when it is earned, and expenditure is recorded when it is incurred.

Non-Current Assets

Purchases of equipment are recorded as assets at their purchase cost. Equipment items are depreciated over their estimated useful lives.

Leave Entitlements

Employees' accrued entitlements to leave are not brought to account in the Balance Sheet as liabilities.

Income Tax

No income tax is payable as the association is an exempt organisation under Subdivision 50-A of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997 as amended.

Accumulated Funds

In the event of the winding up of the Association, accumulated funds will not be distributed to members. The funds are to be distributed to another body incorporated with a similar constitution and objectives as that of the current Association.

SHARES IN B-QUAL AUSTRALIA PTY LIMITED

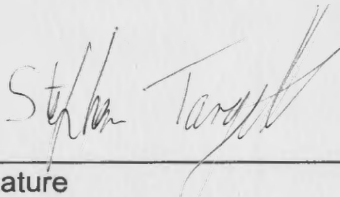
56,321 Ordinary shares at a cost of \$1.00 each	\$56,321.00
Less revaluations in 2009/2010 financial year	-56,221.00
Less revaluation in 2012/2013 financial year	<u>-100.00</u>
Net recorded value of investment	<u>\$ 0.00</u>

AUSTRALIAN HONEY BEE INDUSTRY COUNCIL INC.

STATEMENT BY THE COMMITTEE
FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 APRIL 2023

We the committee of Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc. state that in the opinion of the committee the accompanying financial report:

- 1) Presents fairly the financial position of the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc. as at 30 April 2023 and the results of the Association for the year ended 30 April 2023.
- 2) Have been prepared and presented in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act 2015 of Western Australia.



Signature

Position: Chair

Date: 25/06/2023



Signature

Position: Cheif Executive Officer

Date: 25/06/2023



Ramsey & Associates

Auditors & Accountants

A.B.N. 64 882 623 520

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70 East Street
Ipswich Qld 4305

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Phone: (07) 3281 1755
Fax: (07) 3281 4017

Boonah:
Lankowski Building
2 / 43 High Street
Boonah Qld 4310

PO Box 139 Boonah

Phone: ((07) 5463 2199
Fax: (07) 5463 2068

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Professional Standards Legislation*

INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT

To the Members of Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc.

Opinion

We have audited the financial report of Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc. (the Entity), which comprises the Balance Sheet as at 30 April 2023, and the statement of Income and Expenditure for the year then ended, and notes to the financial statements, including a summary of significant accounting policies, and the statement by the Committee.

In our opinion, the accompanying financial report presents fairly, in all material respects, the financial position of the Entity as at 30 April 2023 and of its financial performance for the year then ended in accordance with the financial reporting requirements listed in the Notes to the financial report.

Basis for Opinion

We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. Our responsibilities under those standards are further described in the *Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report* section of our report. We are independent of the Entity in accordance with the ethical requirements of the Accounting Professional and Ethical Standards Board's APES 110 *Code of Ethics for Professional Accountants* (the Code) that are relevant to our audit of the financial report in Australia. We have also fulfilled our other ethical responsibilities in accordance with the Code.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion.

Emphasis of Matter – Basis of Accounting

We draw attention to Note 1 to the financial report, which describes the basis of accounting. The financial report has been prepared to assist Australian Honey Bee Industry Council Inc. to meet the requirements of its members. As a result, the financial report may not be suitable for another purpose. Our opinion is not modified in respect of the matter.

Responsibilities of Management and Those Charged with Governance for the Financial Report

Management is responsible for the preparation and fair presentation of the financial report in accordance with its financial reporting requirements and for such internal control as management determines is necessary to enable the preparation and fair presentation of a financial report that is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error.

In preparing the financial report, management is responsible for assessing the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern, disclosing, as applicable, matters relating to going concern and using the going concern basis of accounting unless management either intends to liquidate the Entity or to cease operations, or have no realistic alternative but to do so.

Those charged with governance are responsible for overseeing the Entity's financial reporting process.

Auditor's Responsibilities for the Audit of the Financial Report

Our objectives are to obtain reasonable assurance about whether the financial report as a whole is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error, and to issue an auditor's report that includes our opinion. Reasonable assurance is a high level of assurance, but is not a guarantee that an audit conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards will always detect a material misstatement when it exists. Misstatements can arise from fraud or error and are considered material if, individually or in the aggregate, they could reasonably be expected to influence the economic decisions of users taken on the basis of this financial report.

As part of an audit in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, we exercise professional judgment and maintain professional skepticism throughout the audit. We also:

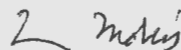
- Identify and assess the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error, design and perform audit procedures responsive to those risks, and obtain audit evidence that is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our opinion. The risk of not detecting a material misstatement resulting from fraud is higher

than for one resulting from error, as fraud may involve collusion, forgery, intention omissions, misrepresentations, or the override of internal control.

- Obtain an understanding of internal control relevant to the audit in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the Entity's internal control.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates and related disclosures made by the directors.
- Conclude on the appropriateness of the directors' use of the going concern basis of accounting and, based on the audit evidence obtained, whether a material uncertainty exists related to events or conditions that may cast significant doubt on the Entity's ability to continue as a going concern. If we conclude that a material uncertainty exists, we are required to draw attention in our auditor's report to the related disclosures in the financial report or, if such disclosures are inadequate, to modify our opinion. Our conclusions are based on the audit evidence obtained up to the date of our auditor's report. However, future events or conditions may cause the Entity to cease to continue as a going concern.
- Evaluate the overall presentation, structure and content of the financial report, including the disclosures, and whether the financial report represents the underlying transactions and events in a manner that achieves fair presentation.

We communicate with those charged with governance regarding, among other matters, the planned scope and timing of the audit and significant audit findings, including any significant deficiencies in internal control that we identify during our audit.

Ramsey & Associates
Auditors & Accountants
Ipswich & Boonah Qld



Neil Morris
Chartered Accountant
Registered Company Auditor

Date: 13 June 2023



Australian Honey Bee Industry Council

ANNUAL REPORT 2023

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