

18<sup>th</sup> November 2024

## **INDUSTRY NOTICE: OBJECTION PERIOD FOR LEVY INCREASE OPENS 18<sup>th</sup> November 2024**

### **To the Australian Honey Bee Industry Levy Payers,**

The Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) wishes to inform industry levy payers of the objection period for the proposed increase in the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed (EPPRD) levy. This increase, from 2.7 cents to 3.7 cents per kilogram of honey, is necessary to cover the honey bee industry's share of the costs incurred during the NSW Varroa Biosecurity Response, totalling up to \$1.1 million. This will temporarily increase the total levy payable from 4.6 cents per kilogram to 5.6 cents per kilogram if you sell more than 1500kg of honey annually.

AHBIC is also proposing an administrative change to re-direct the current 2.7 cents per kilogram EPPR levy to the PHA levy fund to ensure the continuation of the Biosecurity Program and National Bee Pest Surveillance Program.

### **Objection Period:**

- Start Date: **18th November 2024** - End Date: **18th December 2024**

### **Background and Purpose of the Levy Increase**

As a signatory to the EPPRD, the honey bee industry must contribute to the shared costs of national biosecurity responses. The increase in the levy rate will allow the industry to fulfill its financial obligations to repay the cost of the Varroa response over an estimated 6-7 years, based on the average annual honey production.

### **Background to the Proposed Administrative Change**

The EPPR levy fund has been used for many years to finance both honey industry biosecurity cost-shared response contributions, the national bee biosecurity program and national bee pest surveillance program.

The legislation governing the EPPR fund stipulates that any cost-shared response liabilities must be paid before any program expenses. This leaves our programs vulnerable when large cost-shared liabilities are incurred. Therefore, AHBIC proposes industry change the 2.7c/kg currently being collected in EPPR levy, to instead collect it as part of the PHA component of the levy.



This administrative change will provide financial stability and certainty for our industry programs. Allowing the EPPR levy to be utilised more in-line with its primary purpose, to fund response contributions.

**Table 1: Summary of proposed changes**

Levy component	Current rates	Proposed changes
Plant Health Aust levy	0.1 c/kg	2.8 c/kg
Emergency Plant Pest Response levy	2.7 c/kg	1 c/kg
Research & Development	1.5 c/kg	1.5 c/kg
National Residue Survey	0.3 c/kg	0.3 c/kg
<b>Total</b>	<b>4.6 c/kg</b>	<b>5.6 c/kg</b>

### Submitting an Objection

Levy payers are invited to submit any objections to the proposed changes via email. Persons making an objection should include:

- That they are an actual or potential levy payer
- The reason(s) for their objection
- Evidence to support their objection

For confidential objections, please use the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries, and Forestry's Levies Taskforce (DAFF) email address:

- **DAFF Levies Taskforce** - email: [leviestaskforce@aff.gov.au](mailto:leviestaskforce@aff.gov.au)
- **AHBIC**: email – [AHBIC@HoneyBee.org.au](mailto:AHBIC@HoneyBee.org.au)

If you, as a levy payer, require any further information, clarification or have any questions please reach out to AHBIC via email; [ahbic@honeybee.org.au](mailto:ahbic@honeybee.org.au).

Yours sincerely,



Danny Le Feuvre - Chief Executive Officer

