

# AHBIC Industry Update 75

## Varroa Response Concludes

10<sup>th</sup> February 2026

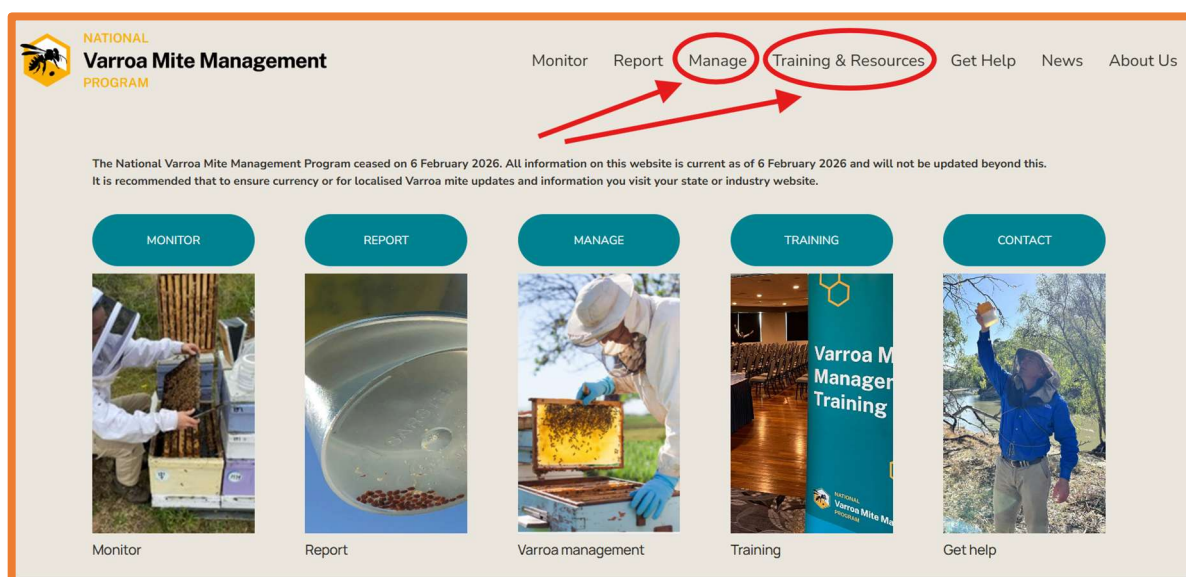
### 1,326 Days of Varroa Response Concluded

Since 22 June 2022 until 6 February 2026 the national response to the Varroa incursion has been one of Australia's largest plant pest responses in history. Wrapping up on 6th February 2026, was the cumulation of a 24 month strong national education, extension and engagement effort with lasting resources delivered to industry. More than 110 workshops were delivered across key beekeeping regions, reaching over 8,500 beekeepers and industry participants through direct engagement with extension officers. This large-scale, coordinated outreach ensured rapid awareness, practical on-ground support, and consistent messaging, helping beekeepers adopt best-practice surveillance and management measures. The scale and reach of this program played a critical role in building industry readiness, improving compliance, and strengthening Australia's overall biosecurity response to Varroa.

All objectives of the Transition to Management have now reached completion.

### Legacy of Resources

The development and rollout of important resources, which beekeepers across the country have already accessed and continue to use as a trusted source of guidance will be hosted on the [www.varroa.org.au](http://www.varroa.org.au) website until December 2026.



All AHBIC member bodies and industry participants, RTO's, educators are urged to access the resources and download for use under creative commons licence. A small number of additional resources to this page have been provided via a specific portal, for anyone interested in a log in for access please reach out for additional details.

The T2M legacy of materials have helped translate complex detail into practical guidelines, reinforcing key components to transition from eradication to consistent and effective Varroa management. Behind this work sits an enormous, coordinated effort involving many dedicated staff across all states and territories, with contributions from multiple industry bodies. This national collaboration ensured the resources were credible, timely, and widely adopted, further strengthening the impact of the extension and engagement program.

## Code of Practice and Biosecurity Manual Updates

Both available at AHBIC and PHA websites, some states and AHBIC member bodies have provided printed copies of these valuable documents. [Biosecurity - Australian Honey Bee Industry Council](#)

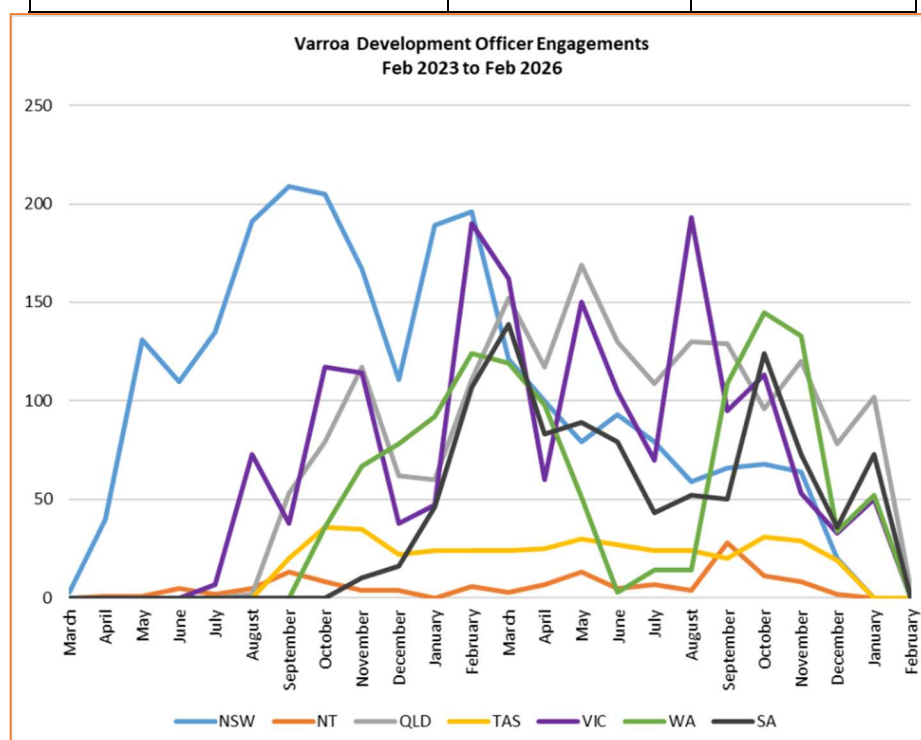
## Bee Biosecurity Online Training

The B.O.L.T Update has been completed and will be available shortly via Plant Health Australia. This remains one of the listed training options for beekeepers with more than 20 hives to remain compliant with the Code of Practice Appendix 1. [Biosecurity Online Training - BOLT - Honeybee Biosecurity](#)

## Varroa Development Officers

An enormous national effort from Varroa Development Officers (VDO's), saw almost half of registered beekeepers across the country engage for help and guidance throughout the 24 month program. VDO activities are summarised below. The commitment and dedication of all Varroa Development Officers has provided our industry with a world class transition to management program.

| Jurisdiction                   | KPI – Goal   | KPI - Engagements  | Participants              |
|--------------------------------|--------------|--------------------|---------------------------|
| NSW/ACT                        | 2,133        | 2,436              | 6,157                     |
| NT                             | 200          | 137                | 237                       |
| QLD                            | 1,530        | 1,820              | 5,673                     |
| TAS                            | 397          | 414                | 848                       |
| VIC                            | 1,440        | 1,708              | 6,949                     |
| WA                             | 1,088        | 1,169              | 2,030                     |
| SA                             | 720          | 1,020              | 2,142                     |
| <b>Total</b>                   | <b>7,508</b> | <b>8,704</b>       | <b>24,036</b>             |
| Breakdown of interaction types |              | Total Interactions | Percentage of engagements |
| In field/apiary practical      |              | 4,801              | 55%                       |
| Presentation/workshop          |              | 1,812              | 21%                       |
| Call/email                     |              | 2,091              | 24%                       |



## State Funded Industry Support

Although funding for Varroa development officers has concluded with the T2M as of 6<sup>th</sup> February, however, some state jurisdictions have invested their own funds to extend these important roles to support beekeepers, which is a fantastic outcome for industry.

- NSW have invested in and additional 3 BBO positions totalling 6 Bee Biosecurity Officers and a small team has also been stood up with 4 new Compliance Officer positions in a honeybee focused small team.
- QLD have finalised their BBO position along with an Industry Engagement Officer role to continue to support beekeepers, offering tailored advice.
- Vic have added 2 new BBO roles continuing to provide varroa management support to beekeepers, complementing Victoria's existing apiary team.
- SA have secured their BBO position along with extending 2 Varroa Development Officer roles into 2026.

## Virus Baseline Survey

A collection of honey bee samples from across Australia have been screened for important viruses of honey bees to provide statistically relevant baseline data against which changes in virus distribution can be compared as Varroa mite populations change. The full Baseline Survey results can be read here: [National Baseline Project Report](#)

## Queen Bee Breeding Sector Upskilling & Analysis

Advanced training in queen bee breeding, particularly for selecting Varroa mite resistance traits were identified as high priority for the sector. One workshop, led by Elizabeth Frost NSW DPIRD Technical Specialist Honey Bees was delivered at Tocal College in two half days on June 3-4, 2025. The successful workshop included 30 participants a combination of experienced queen producers and breeders with representation from ACT, NSW, QLD, SA, TAS, VIC and WA.

The goals of the Queen Sector Analysis Report project were to:

- Establish an accurate and detailed understanding of the queen breeding sector's size, value, and geographic distribution.
- Identify barriers to growth, sector challenges, and opportunities for genetic improvement.
- Provide actionable insights and recommendations to support sector expansion and sustainability.

The full report can be read here: [Queen Bee Sector Report](#)

## Beekeepers: All States & Territories: Check your Hives!!

AHBIC reminds beekeepers it is still very important to conduct surveillance and monitoring of Varroa in colonies in your care. With current conditions, checking hives for presence of varroa using one of the preferred methods is essential.

In those states free of varroa, if you suspect you have found mites then ring the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

You can reach out to AHBIC via:

### **Varroa Coordinator**

Bianca Giggins

0402 467 780

[bianca@honeybee.org.au](mailto:bianca@honeybee.org.au)

*AHBIC, its employees, executive and consultants expressly disclaim all and any liability to any person in respect of anything, and the consequences of anything, done or omitted to be done in reliance, whether wholly, partly, upon the whole or any part of the contents of this industry update document.*