

AHB TMG Minutes

Meeting Two of the Asian Honey Bee Transition Management Group (AHB TMG)

Teleconference held on Tuesday 20th December, 2011

Attendees: Colin Grant DAFF (Chair), Lois Ransom DAFF, Mikael Hirsch DAFF, Kareena Arthy DEEDI, Jim Thompson DEEDI, Neil O'Brien DEEDI, Rick Symons DEEDI, Lindsay Bourke AHBIC, Greg Fraser PHA, Rod Turner PHA, Sharyn Taylor PHA, Sam Malfroy PHA (Secretariat) and Jenna Taylor PHA.

Apologies: Nil

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

The Chair welcomed the Members of the Asian Honey Bee Transition Management Group (AHB TMG) to the teleconference.

The Chair reinforced the need for urgency in progressing objectives of the AHB T2M program and this was agreed by all Members.

Item 2 – Terms of Reference

Terms of Reference (ToR) for the AHB TMG as broadly outlined in the PHA management contract and “Plan for the Transition to Management of the Asian Honey Bees” were provided. The group felt a more formal set of ToR need to be developed and it was agreed these would be provided to Members for comment shortly after the meeting.

Item 3 – Governance Arrangements

Chair:

It was confirmed that DAFF would provide the Chair for the AHB TMG.

Membership:

Discussion was held regarding engagement of the Federal Council of Australian Apiarists Association (FCAAA) with activities of the AHB T2M program. PHA agreed to follow up with FCAAA to determine if they are satisfied with their current level of engagement.

Secretariat and Administration Support:

Members agreed that PHA would provide secretariat and administration support to the AHB TMG and the Scientific Advisory Group (SAG) to the Program.

Roles and Responsibilities:

PHA and DEEDI will continue to work together to finalise detail within the operational plans for each of the 6 Australian Government funded projects in the AHB T2M.

It was raised whether industry money provided for the AHB T2M program could be allocated toward the National Sentinel Hive Program. It was agreed that while industry funds can be used for optimising surveillance and detection techniques within specific projects in the AHB T2M, the National Sentinel Hive Program is a separate program considering options for national surveillance arrangements for exotic bee pests. Funds are being sought separately for this purpose. PHA agreed to consult with AHBIC and FCAAA out of session regarding the progress and future of the national sentinel hive program.

The Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation (RIRDC) are managing funds on behalf of FCAAA for the FCAAA component of the AHB T2M program and, as a result, PHA has been contacted by RIRDC regarding research proposals that could be of benefit to the AHB

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T2M. The Chair stated industry can allocate their funding component as they see fit however, it was stressed that this should form part of an integrated plan with the other funding partners. It was agreed that PHA, FCAAA and AHBIC, with comment from DEEDI, will coordinate industry funds, in clear support of specific objectives outlined in the Industry Projects 1 and 2 in the AHB T2M. PHA agreed to contact AHBIC, FCAAA, RIRDC and DEEDI to initiate the process of reviewing the RIRDC research proposals.

Item 4 – Communication

A draft communication protocol was tabled. It was agreed that as PHA is an observer to the AHB TMG, it will refer all media enquiries on the AHB T2M to the DAFF Media Unit. The Chair stated that media enquiries on the AHB T2M will be managed by the DAFF Media Unit. It was considered appropriate that DEEDI would manage media enquiries regarding the operational components of the AHB T2M.

Communication for the SAG was discussed, and it is expected that each Member of the SAG will direct any media enquiries to the Chair of the SAG for forwarding to the appropriate agency. Minutes for SAG meetings will be uploaded to the AHB T2M website following approval from the AHB TMG. The Chair reinforced that it is not the responsibility of individual SAG members to respond to media enquiries.

It was agreed that a Q & A document will be developed by PHA for the Program. Once endorsed by the AHB TMG, this document will be uploaded to the AHB T2M website.

Item 5 – Reporting

Update from the SAG Chair: Rod Turner

It was noted that the SAG had held one face to face meeting and one teleconference at which the AHB T2M projects and an upcoming field trip organised to Cairns on the 18th and 19th of January 2012 were discussed. It was noted that all Members of the SAG fund their own flights and accommodation for SAG meetings.

Update from DEEDI : Neil O'Brien

Neil O'Brien provided information on the status of the T2M program. It was noted that 526 swarms and nests had been detected since May 2007. Infestation is currently still within the containment zone and all detections currently being reported have arisen from public notifications.

Item 7 –Future Meetings

It was agreed that the AHB TMG would meet monthly via teleconference. PHA will send out proposed dates for the next six meetings (from January to June inclusive) for confirmation.

Item 8 – Close of Meeting

The Chair thanked the Members of the AHB TMG and closed the meeting.