

AHB TMG Minutes

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

Teleconference held on Wednesday 27th June, 2012

Attendees: Colin Grant DAFF (Chair), Louise Clark DAFF, Glynn Maynard DAFF, Rick Symons DAFF Queensland, Craig Jennings DAFF Queensland, Russell Gilmour DAFF Queensland, Lindsay Bourke AHBIC, Trevor Weatherhead AHBIC, Rod Turner PHA, Sam Malfroy PHA (Secretariat) Greg Fraser PHA, Brad Siebert PHA, Susanna Driessen PHA and Jenna Taylor PHA.

Apologies: Kareena Arthy DAFF Queensland, Neil O'Brien DAFF Queensland, Lois Ransom DAFF and Stephen Ware AHBIC.

Item 1 – Welcome by the Chair

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

Item 2 – Discussion and acceptance of Minutes from previous meeting

The minutes from Meeting 6 were tabled and discussed. The TMG agreed that the minutes provided an accurate summary of the meeting and were ready to be placed on the AHB website by PHA.

Item 3 – Action items from previous meeting

The action items from Meeting 6 were tabled and discussed. The TMG stated that all of the action items from the previous meeting had been initiated and were progressing well.

The issue of the remaining Industry contribution to the AHB T2M was discussed amongst the TMG. The possibility of using the remaining Industry contribution to fund Industry Liaison Officer (ILO) training for the honey bee industry was proposed. The Chair stated that the Honey bee industry is best placed to come up with a plan and funding model for the remaining industry T2M contribution, which could then be considered by the AHB TMG. It was agreed that AHBIC would propose how the remaining funds could be spent in accordance with the AHB T2M.

BQ added that training packages outlining reporting requirements and identification and control of AHB was already being delivered to beekeepers in the Cairns region.

Item 4 – Update on the SAG: Rod Turner (Chair of the SAG)

The Chair of the AHB Scientific Advisory Group (AHB SAG) stated that the SAG had not met since the last TMG meeting. However, the Chair of the SAG stated that they are currently holding discussions with Biosecurity Queensland about an appropriate date and time to hold the next SAG meeting. This meeting will discuss elements of the Fipronil remote poisoning trial, the results gathered so far and also research activities that Biosecurity Queensland are conducting over the coming months.

Item 5 – Reporting from DAFF Queensland (Russell Gilmour)

Russell Gilmour provided an update on AHB activities in Queensland. This report is attached as attachment A.

Several questions were raised by AHBIC concerning some aspects of the report provided by BQ, as well as from first-hand accounts of beekeepers in Cairns.

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The first question was in regards to the industry training for beekeepers provided by BQ and the public liability that beekeepers may face in responding to AHB calls. Biosecurity Queensland clarified that the training provided was about informing beekeepers that are on an AHB swarm list how to respond to reports of suspect AHB and that BQ was not asking beekeepers to advise any person on how to kill AHB. It was discussed that the concept of having this list is in place, just as there is for the European honey bee swarm list, was to ensure the people on the list had the skills to identify AHB and to respond to calls from the public and then confirm the identity of the bee. It was not to advise the public on how to kill bees. AHBIC requested that BQ follow up about where the public liability may lay for beekeepers with AHBIC directly.

AHBIC requested that PHA contact the APVMA about the likelihood that Fipronil could be registered for beekeepers for commercial use after the AHB T2M. Biosecurity Queensland stated that they have already held preliminary discussions with the APVMA and that it is required for Industry to act on this and present a case to the APVMA. The Chair requested that PHA and AHBIC follow up with APVMA out of session in regards to this issue, and what kind of research would need to be completed for this registration to occur, and potentially what chemical competency standards would need to be completed by beekeepers to use this chemical in the control of AHB after the AHB T2M finishes in June 2013.

AHBIC also requested that a report conducted on the effects of the AHB eradication program on local beekeepers and farmers be released for the public. Biosecurity Queensland stated that this report is being built on for further reports, however, stated that they would be happy for this report to be provided to AHBIC.

Biosecurity Queensland also outlined priorities for the next three months of the AHB T2M which included:

- Continued community engagement through training and the show circuit, as well as Bee Alert Week
- Complete the literature review on the Asian Honey Bee (Java genotype)
- Hold a SAG and analyse the data and interpretation of results for the Fipronil remote poisoning trials
- Assist DAFF Biosecurity for surveillance of ports
- Assist researchers who are conducting research as part of the AHB T2M in the Cairns region

Item 6 – Future Meetings

The Chair stated that PHA will follow up out of session with both DAFF, AHBIC and Biosecurity Queensland regarding possible dates for future meetings of the AHB T2M, The TMG agreed that meetings would be held every two months from now, starting late August, October, December, February and then monthly in April, May and June until the AHB T2M finishes on June 30 2013.

Item 7 – Summary and Close of Meeting

The Chair stated significant progress had been made on the AHB T2M. The Chair recommended that the SAG hold a teleconference within the next 2 weeks to discuss the Biosecurity Queensland report and to provide technical advice on elements of the AHB T2M.

Once the SAG had held the teleconference, the Chair requested that Biosecurity Queensland and PHA work on creating a short summary document that could be placed on the AHB website which outlines major research activities that Biosecurity Queensland will be working on over the next 3 months.

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The Chair thanked the Members of the AHB TMG for their participation in the teleconference and closed the meeting.