

# Bee Surveillance Steering Committee Minutes



Plant Health  
AUSTRALIA

21  
years

# 8<sup>TH</sup> MEETING OF THE NATIONAL BEE SURVEILLANCE STEERING COMMITTEE

## MEETING MINUTES

Virtual | 27<sup>th</sup> April 2022

## Attendance

**Attendees:** Gary Artlett (DAF Q), Megan Power (NSW DPI), Cynthia Kefaloukos (VIC DJPR), Megan Flanagan (DPIPWE), Michael McManus (PIRSA), Darryl Hardie (DPIRD), Sally Heaton (DPIR NT), Kyelee Driver (ACT Govt), Ranjith Subasinghe (DAWE), Sharyn Taylor (PHA), Ashley Zamek (Hort Innovation), Danny Le Feuvre (AHBIC) and Trevor Weatherhead (AHBIC - Chair).

**Observers:** Jenny Shanks (PHA), Kathryn Pagler (PHA), Michael Stedman (PIRSA).

**Apologies:** Andrew Bishop (DPIPWE), James Planck (DAF Q).

## Welcome and introductions

Meeting opened at 2.00 pm. The chair welcomed members to the meeting.

## Item 1: Meeting 7 minutes and actions

### 1.1. Minutes from meeting 7

The minutes of the 7<sup>th</sup> National Bee Pest Surveillance Program Steering Committee were accepted and endorsed.

### 1.2. Action items

Committee members were referred to the "Meeting 7 Action Items" paper. Most action items were completed with the outstanding action items discussed within agenda items.

## Committee Terms of Reference

### 2.1 Discuss review of the ToR

Committee members were referred to the "Bee Surveillance Steering Committee Terms of Reference" paper. The paper contains draft changes to the terms of reference suggested by PHA including making the ToR timebound (2022-2024 to cover the duration of the current program), and having other relevant parties involved such as Grain Producers Australia (GPA).

**Action 1:** PHA to circulate the draft word version of the ToR to committee members.

**Action 2:** Committee members to provide feedback on the draft ToR.

## National Activities

### 3.1 National program update

PHA provided a verbal update on the NBPSP:

- The head agreement between PHA and Hort Innovation has been signed.
- As part of the first milestone due in June 2022, the following documents need to be developed:
  - Monitoring and evaluation plan.
  - Risk assessment – this will be circulated to all jurisdictional agencies for input.
  - Communications and stakeholder engagement plan.
    - The agreement requires development of six articles each year, with the topics including the benefits to plant industries, purpose of the NBPSP, the agencies involvement, activities, pest targets and industry collaborators.

- The Communications Plan will provide an outline of timetables for engagement with plant industries and each government agency.
- The Communications Plan will also describe the approvals process needed on media articles (agencies, PHA and Hort Innovation).
- Requests will be made to government partners for information to assist PHA write the article, this will be sent to the agency for review.
- The Communication Plan will also outline the attributions for all communication pieces to make sure all funding sources and government agencies in-kind contribution are recognised.
- Sub-contracts with government agencies have been in negotiation for about 18 months. While agreements have not been signed, all jurisdictions have provided assurance they are conducting activities, and PHA has already received data from some jurisdictions.
- The 3<sup>rd</sup> of June is the first assessment point where PHA will review the data provided against the contracted workplan requirements.

Discussion was held on communications for the NBPSP and Steering Committee members requested copies of published articles developed by the Program, both for information and to ensure opportunities for cross-promotion can be actioned.

**Action 3:** PHA to circulate published articles to committee members.

Responses from jurisdictions on where they are at with contract signing:

RESPONSE	
QLD	Contract is with PHA to progress.
NSW	Contract will be signed soon and forwarded to PHA.
VIC	Waiting for approval from VIC legal team.
TAS	With TAS Business Manager for final checks and legal checks, will then be ready for signing.
SA	Final stages, need SA Executive Director to sign off.
WA	WA to review with Apiary officer and legal.
NT	Comments to be returned from NT, should be done in the next few days.
ACT	N/A
Commonwealth	N/A

Discussion was held on data standards for the NBPSP. Due to the different workplans now being implemented, the NBPSP has not been able to use the Portal developed in the previous program. Data input has been discussed with agencies and will occur using a spreadsheet template. This template has been based on the AusPestCheck™ (APC) data standards, with the aim of having national consistency in the vocabulary and data fields collected.

PHA presented the draft data standards and provided a verbal summary:

- The data standards are timebound (2022-2024).
- The purpose of the document is to ensure national consistency of data into APC.
- These standards are largely consistent with the way jurisdictions already collect data (e.g. date of activity, entity name, status (present or absent), latitude longitude etc.)
- An additional field has been included on the acaricide used.

Discussion was held whether all data for bee surveillance (including data on established pests such as AFB, EFB and small hive beetle) should be collated in one central location. This would assist national reporting for OIE as it was raised that PHA reports NBPSP data to Animal Health Australia, however jurisdictions provide

separate information on established pests.

It was noted that inclusion of AFB data into APC had been raised at the NBBP Steering Committee Meeting 14, however it was agreed at that time that AFB data would not be included. It was discussed that it may be preferable to create a new program in APC for AFB, EFB and small hive beetle data (i.e. separate to the NBSP). Jurisdictions could provide data into this program on a voluntary basis to support their ability to provide reports for OIE or internal purposes.

PHA will amend the data standards if needed to include any additional data each jurisdiction has agreed to share on established pests.

**Action 4:** PHA to amend data standards as needed to include any additional data each jurisdiction has agreed to share on established pests.

Discussion was held on GPS accuracy and PHA will discuss with the APC team whether a field defining GPS accuracy should be included in APC. It was noted that PHA is not responsible for amending or changing latitude and longitudes that are incorrect.

**Action 5:** PHA to discuss with APC team about GPS accuracy.

If a new acaricide is introduced into the program PHA will amend the data standards and the controlled vocabulary in APC.

**Action 6:** PHA to circulate the draft data standards for comment.

**Action 7:** All jurisdictions to provide advice to PHA on whether they require the establishment of a separate program in APC for established bee pests.

### 3.2 Update on permit applications/amendments

PHA provided the following verbal update:

- PHA holds a number of permits for:
  - surveillance with several different products listed.
  - management – this would be enacted should pests such as Varroa become established (minor use/emergency permit).
  - for the euthanasia of bees.
- PHA is still waiting on response from APVMA regarding whether MRL testing twice per year would satisfy requirements to allow consumption of honey, and if so whether this wording can be incorporated into the surveillance permit.
- A permit for Apivar (active Amitraz), was issued in March 2022.
- A permit for FormicPro – previously MAQS plus, was issued in September 2021.

### 3.3 PHA to cease holding APVMA permits

The PHA Board has made a decision to move away from holding national permits due to resourcing and limited staff capability and capacity to maintain this activity. PHA has approached AHBIC to discuss their capacity in holding the national permits regarding to honey bees and acaricides.

Steering Committee members were asked to provide any issues or considerations regarding this decision.

It was noted that PHA would still purchase products for the NBSP as per the contractual agreements.

**Action 8:** All Steering Committee members to provide advice on any issues or considerations regarding PHA not holding national permits for the NBSP.

**Action 9:** PHA to continue discussions with AHBIC about AHBIC holding permits for the NBPSP.

### 3.4 Other biosecurity/surveillance business

Jurisdictions provided the following biosecurity or surveillance updates:

RESPONSE	
QLD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Progressing with implementation of the new program</li> <li>Hives in Brisbane being moved to form a better array around the seaport</li> <li>Rainbow bee-eater pellet surveillance sites being identified around Brisbane</li> <li>Autumn round of community hive surveillance about to begin in Townsville</li> <li>Issues with remote catchboxes: Townsville hives are offline</li> </ul>
NSW	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On track for milestone delivery</li> </ul>
VIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On track for milestone delivery</li> </ul>
TAS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On track for milestone delivery</li> </ul>
SA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On track for milestone delivery</li> <li>Learnings from the <i>Japanese encephalitis</i> response which could be valuable for the bee industry.</li> </ul>
WA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sought advice on:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>If there were any positive MRL test results for the NBPSP</li> <li>Information on the PHA media campaign (NBPSP) – covered under Action 3</li> </ul> </li> <li>Noted diagnostic capacity within DPIRD is becoming an issue, looking to source out diagnostic work</li> </ul>
NT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On track for milestone delivery</li> </ul>
ACT	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>On track for milestone delivery</li> </ul>
Commonwealth	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Purple Hive Project to be discussed offline between commonwealth and VIC</li> </ul>
Hort Innovation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nothing to add</li> </ul>
AHBIC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Nothing to add</li> </ul>

Next meeting will be in October

### Actions

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE
1	Circulate the draft word version of the ToR to committee members.	PHA	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
2	Committee members to provide feedback on the draft ToR.	All	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
3	Circulate published media articles on the NBPSP to committee members.	PHA	Ongoing/as needed
4	PHA to amend data standards as needed to include any additional data each jurisdiction has agreed to share on established pests.	PHA	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
5	PHA to discuss with APC team about GPS accuracy.	PHA	5 <sup>th</sup> September 2022
6	Circulate the draft data standards for comment.	PHA	5 <sup>th</sup> September

ITEM	DESCRIPTION	PERSON(S) RESPONSIBLE	DUE DATE
			2022
<b>7</b>	Provide advice to PHA on whether they require the establishment of a program for established bee pests.	All	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
<b>8</b>	Provide advice on any issues or considerations regarding PHA not holding national permits for the NBPSP.	All	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2022
<b>9</b>	Continue discussions regarding AHBIC holding permits for the NBPSP.	PHA and AHBIC	4 <sup>th</sup> October 2022