

## EXOTIC BEE DISEASE AND PEST RESPONSE PROCEDURES

**Venue:** Blenheim Country Lodge, Chart Room

**Date:** Friday 19 July 1991

**Present:** I Dickinson, M Wraight, G White, A McCaw, D Bettesworth, C Van Eaton, K Richards, N Wallingford, B Stevenson, B Clements, G Martin, R Clark, M Stuckey, D Ward, F Trewby, G McKenzie, K Herron, R Berry, M Haines, M Reid

**Apologies:** D Penrose, P Townsend, J Dobson, I Berry

C Van Eaton discussed ground rules. No 'knocking'. Be frank and honest. Everyone has a chance to speak. Don't interrupt the speaker (except for the chair). Be concise. Don't be embarrassed.

Objectives for the day discussed. Acceptance of need for exotic disease and pest response (EDPR). Technical issues (drug feeding), beekeeper involvement (as inspectors, in decision making), compensation, pollination (implications if not allowed to go into orchards), movement control (how much will be reasonable), communication, public relations.

Discussed current EDPR manuals. Sampling, organisation and mobilisation, separate manual for each pest/disease. Need for consent of industry. Taken lessons from overseas into account? Experience from Australian experience with European foulbrood (EFB)? Yes, but fairly depressing for the most part. NZ has advantage of island status. Also advantage of our size and internal organisation of industry. Apiaries register also allows movement control measures, etc. How many unregistered hives are there out there? Computerisation has meant that register is at least known to be up to date (though not necessarily complete) when compared to the old paper system. Feral hive issue discussed. Public will respond if known to be emergency situation - will report hives unregistered and locations of feral colonies.

If we acknowledge that there is little hope of eradication or control, should we identify those pests or diseases to give less priority. Each pest and disease might have several prongs of attack. Need to back off eradication attempts soon enough.

Eradication and treatment - decisions will have to be made at the time. We will need to be happy with the personnel and methods for making those decisions.

Principles of response, using EFB hive near Rotorua tip as example. First need to set up headquarters, probably in Rotorua. Teams of beekeepers with MAF leader (not necessarily apicultural). Survey of area.

If detected early enough, eradication could be possible. If monitoring is adequate we could identify early. For each pest or disease, eradication is conceivable (as none are spore forming.) For chalkbrood outbreak, we didn't have surveillance, computerised apiary register, or lab diagnosis facilities.

Discussion on EFB experience in Australia. First two or three years were the worst.

Use of delimiting survey. Should we be depopulating before we find the 'edges' of an outbreak? Would beekeepers play with the diseases before reporting? Need for education to encourage beekeepers to send in samples, etc.

Are there statistical methods for identifying extent of outbreaks?

EFB and necessity for surveys. Not realistic to identify each and every possible case.

Delimiting survey. Lab for identification will be available within 24 hours. Possibilities of EFB immediately before or during pollination. Situational ethics aspect of where and when it is identified.

Delimiting survey depends on likelihood of its spread - queen breeder, Waikato, pollination beekeepers.

Question of stopping movements between North and South Island. No compensation payable under Apiaries Act. NBA arrange insurance for outbreak? NI/SI movement ban would not stop forever but could mean that drug feeding could be restricted to only one island to start with.

Apiaries Act would still be basic legal structure of management of outbreak. Chief Veterinary Officer (CVO) would still be responsible for policy (advised by apiary section) and level of compensation if it is payable as a schedule one disease.

Suggestion that EFB could be eradicated with oxytetracycline (OTC). OTC is in widespread use with poultry and pigs. Requires Minister's notice in gazette. Also requires registration; emergency use could be done within just a few weeks to keep it going.

Problems discussed with EFB in honey producer/packer. Comment that random sampling could be done.

Would the Minister really accept this committee's decision on the composition of an advisory committee for second schedule diseases? Believed yes.

Morning tea.

Should beekeepers be in majority on committee making decisions? Government will probably always have power of veto. Discussion on differences between Bee Disease Advisory Committee (BDAC) (in Apiaries Act for schedule one) and Policy Advisory Committee (PAG) (only in response manuals and used for schedule two).

Discussion on numbers on committee, where the people would come from? Need to co-op additional members. Should be appointed by the executive. Guidelines related to methods of appointment. Would involve serious commitment for up to two weeks. NBA to name three and appoint two industry members with specialist or area knowledge, with the PAG having the power to co-op further? Agreed that should be five from NBA. MAF would have two. Should also have power to co-op with those to have voting rights also.

Costs of calling together PAG would be as part of the ERP. Daily meetings would also include the beekeepers involved in the surveying work, the local beekeepers.

Sampling for EFB would be symptom checking, mites would be miticide strip with sticky paper on hive floor, Africanised bees would be sampling of bees.

Problems of getting required numbers of beekeepers. Who would commit (sign a contract). Discussion on payment of wages. Principle that MAF would contract with NBA for supply of the inspectors with wages to be paid to be a condition of the contract.

Discussion on specific outbreak and principle that industry could compensate for destruction of hives. In an isolated outbreak involving only 1 or 2 outfits, destroy hives and industry pay compensation.

Discussion on use of trust funds to use as security to fund compensation scheme rather than using a levy which would involve ongoing costs even if it were not being called upon for use.

Possibility that MAF reps on PAG might say 'feed drugs' while NBA reps could ask beekeeper to destroy, with NBA agreeing to pay compensation.

Are we in a position to tolerate EFB effects for several years until resistance has been achieved? Discussion on effects to industry for those several years. Would we want to do without drugs to have the advantages several years down the track of still being a drug free honey country?

Resistance versus drug feeding dependent on whether its a honey or pollination operation.

Lunch.

What are requirements for movement control? Cook Strait and 10 km from initial outbreak proposed. Movements of bees and bee products not allowed (though you could move bees into area under permit).

Agreed that there is a need for NI/SI initial restrictions. Should be for a set time. Workability would be centred on about 7 days. Emphasised that review is necessary, and that could proceed by permit.

Disease control area. Would include need for 'dump' yards that could be used to move bees to as they needed to come out of orchards, for instance. If two hives found more than 10 km apart, probably not possible to contain.

Again a possibility of shifting under permit. 'Semi-permeable membrane'.

Need to have general knowledge and support. Depends on good will of beekeepers. Considered workable. Need for education.

Ten kilometres was chosen as reasonable area to allow initial inspections within first six days. Discussion on whether this is too large or too small. First sampling should be on the outside of the area, not the middle.

'Infected area' is area 3.2 km from initial outbreak. First inspections are to find only the first hive that has

it in a yard. Once found, then spread the 'net' further, rather than continuing to inspect. Goal is to find limit of the spread, not percentage within the area.

Discussion then related to trying to identify all areas of concurrence.

Acceptance of need for EDPR for all diseases. For all diseases, the answer is yes.

Drug use for appropriate conditions conditional on approval by PAG/BOAC. Yes in an eradication/control programme, but not necessarily for ongoing management. Adequate supplies, fast approval and registration necessary. Two-three week period mentioned as initial approval required, to be reviewed after that, especially in kiwifruit areas. Reluctant agreement that EFB outbreak would ultimately lead to OTC treatment generally if the outbreak was widespread.

NBA would contract for supply of necessary inspectors, provided that adequate compensation for all costs be met by ERP budget. NBA to develop national register. Understanding that this would involve training programme.

Beekeeper involvement in decision making. PAG will be 5 industry representatives appointed by NBA executive. Two MAF. Power to co-opt. All have voting rights. Non-personal attendance possible. Training might be required in the administrative procedures. Technical training might also be required. PAG to be formed for use even if statutory BDAC is formed to act in advisory role. BDAC member to be on PAG.

Compensation systems for schedule two (EFB). Recommendation to approach trustees for compensation programme for registered hives only. Access facility to suggested \$150,000.

Pollination. Drug feeding during pollination, then review. Probable continuation of reluctant OTC feeding. Development of 'safe area' to take hives out to - quarantine area. Compensation to be for destruction, not loss of crop or pollination opportunity. Effect on pollination already considered by the decision to feed OTC (pollination the main reason for agreeing to feed OTC).

Movement control. 10 km radius. Cook Strait would be automatic. 24 hour review. Permit for movements. Outside in inspections.

Communication. Media contact from industry to come via the advisory group.

A McCaw suggested name of group Beekeeping Advisory System to Avoid Rare Diseases...