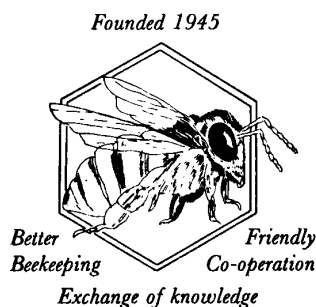


SOUTH AUSTRALIAN APIARISTS' ASSOCIATION INC.

State President:
Mr Ian Roberts

State Secretary:
Mrs Wendy Thiele



24th January 2014

Committee Secretary
Senate Standing Committees on Rural and Regional Affairs and Transport
PO Box 6100
Parliament House
CANBERRA ACT 2600
rrat.sen@aph.gov.au

Dear Secretary,

The South Australian Apiarists' Association represents the majority of commercial apiarists in South Australia and therefore, below, put forward our views for consideration to the Senate Inquiry into the future of beekeeping and pollination service industries in Australia. SAAA continues to support the 25 recommendations listed in 'More Than Honey' report 2008, the majority of which have yet to be actioned. We refer to the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council's (AHBIC) status reports on each of these recommendations.

We would like to focus on 3 specific topics as follows:-

1) *Resource security* –

- a) The government formally recognise the importance of commercially managed honey bees to primary production and that access to the natural environment is essential to promote healthy bees.
- b) National Government support State-based working groups to sustain and improve access to public lands.
- c) To investigate National Programs and foreign ownership of properties that may hinder access for beekeeping (eg Bushbids).
- d) Support Research & Development projects into bee-related flora resources. Increased monoculture coupled with the increasing use of systemic chemicals on common agricultural crops are potential issues hindering adequate nutrition for honey bees.
- e) That government-funded revegetation programs refer to planting guides (*such as "Bee Friendly", a planting guide for European honeybees and Australian native pollinators by Mark Leech, and 'Native Eucalypts of SA' by Dean Nicolle*) as resources.

2) *Biosecurity* –

- a) That we support current biosecurity efforts and believe that it is imperative that these continue and are strengthened, with special reference to exotic pests such as varroa, tropilaelaps etc.

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- b) That government re-establish it's former commitments to State inspectors to maintain control of endemic diseases and neglected material etc during and up to the time industry can take on full cost recovery for itself. This would ensure a smoother and more compliant transition to a self-regulated industry.
 - c) Taking into consideration work that has already been done by States, develop a National Incursion Training scheme for beekeepers and Departmental representatives, so that every State is uniform.
 - d) That the Government financially support research required to develop critical data that would allow specific chemicals to be used in an eradication effort should an incursion of an exotic pest occur. Remote poisoning will be an essential tool for a successful eradication attempt - satisfying government authorities (APVMA) with this information is beyond our industry's financial means.
- 3) *Labelling laws and Honey Standards of Australia -*
- a) We refer to 5.47 under Imports and Standards section of '*More Than Honey*' report.
 - b) Greater enforcement on the quality of locally produced and imported honey.
It is imperative that Australian honey be defined as a '*prescribed good*'.
 - c) Increased enforcement of existing laws with regard to compliance of existing standards for honey as described in Standard 2.8.2 'Honey' in the Australia New Zealand Food Standards (Code F2008B00657) being "*Honey means the natural sweet substance produced by honey bees from the nectar of blossoms or from secretions of living parts of plants or excretion of plant sucking insects on the living parts of plants, which honey bees collect, transform and combine with specific substances of their own, store and leave in the honey comb to ripen and mature*".

SAAA Executive Committee wish to thank the Standing Committee for their endeavours on behalf of the beekeeping Industry.

Yours sincerely,

Ian Roberts
President
for and on behalf of
SA Apiarists Association Incorporated Executive Council