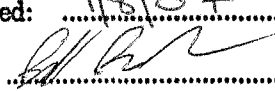


**Pender, Bill (REPS)**

**From:** Shea, Tracy  
**Sent:** Wednesday, 1 August 2007 7:41 PM  
**To:** Committee, Aff (REPS)  
**Subject:** Inquiry into the Future Development of the Australian Honey Bee Industry

The Secretary of the Committee  
 House Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry

Re: Inquiry into the Future Development of the Australian Honey Bee Industry

<b>Submission No:</b> . 84 .....
<b>Date Received:</b> .. 1/8/07 .....
<b>Secretary:</b> ..  .....

I refer to the Media Statement released on 26 March 2007 by The House of Representatives Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry Committee seeking submissions relating to the Inquiry into the Future Development of the Australian Honey Bee Industry.

Information relating to beekeeping in Western Australia which may be of interest to your Inquiry can be found on the Department of Environment and Conservation's (DEC's) NatureBase website  
<http://www.naturebase.net/content/view/884/905/>.

DEC is responsible for issuing apiary site permits on Crown lands in Western Australia. I have attached some key documents relating to DEC's administration and management of beekeeping, for your information. *Note: DEC was formed in July 2006 from an amalgamation of the Department of Conservation and Land Management (CALM) and the Department of Environment. Some of the documents attached were produced by CALM – these are still valid documents.*

- Revised Draft Beekeeping Policy 41 – Beekeeping on public land in Western Australia.
- Standard Apiary Site Permit Conditions (includes sections relating to Notification, Access, Placement of Hives on Site, Site Preparation, Camping, Adequate Water Supplies, Extraction, Dieback Hygiene, Fire Management, Rubbish, Pesticides, Neglected/Abandoned Hives, Public Liability Insurance).
- The Code of Conduct for apiary sites on Pastoral Leases.
- Criteria for assessing apiary sites in conservation areas (these Criteria have been developed in consultation with the Beekeeping Consultative Committee (BCC), and are currently used in the development of management plans for parks and reserves. The BCC will have the opportunity for further input into any future refinements of the Criteria).

The BCC (convened by DEC) was formed to facilitate discussion and consultation between the Department, industry groups and other Government agencies on issues that may affect the beekeeping industry in Western Australia. It generally meets twice a year and is comprised of representatives from the Western Australian Apiarists Society, Wescobee Limited, Western Australian Farmers Federation, Western Australian Beekeepers Association, Pollination Association of WA, Water Corporation, Pastoral Lands Board and the Pastoralists and Graziers Association. For more than 20 years the BCC has been an effective means of facilitating improvements to the administration and management of apiary sites and the permit system for accessing Crown lands for the purpose of honey production.

General statistics relating to beekeeping on Crown land in Western Australia can be found at  
<http://www.naturebase.net/content/view/884/905/1/1/>.

DEC is also developing a Feral Bee Control Strategy (see attachment) in consultation with the BCC. Stage One has been completed in partnership with the Water Corporation. DEC trials are continuing, using remote poisoning for large scale programs and in situations where the location of feral hives cannot be determined or accessed. Baiting trials have been conducted at three sites, with effective control of feral hives being observed. The Department has developed a Standard Operational Procedures (SOP) manual for feral bee control based on the results of the trials conducted during the program. The SOP considers the impact and risks to non-target species and the relevant occupational health and safety requirements for efficient baiting of feral bees using the pesticide.

With regard to fire management:

- Western Australia has a very fire prone climate;
- there is a high incidence of fires due to human causes (70+%) and lightning (up to 40%);
- fire is a natural and integral factor in the landscape, which has and will continue to influence the nature of vegetated landscape and biodiversity;
- in the absence of adequate fuel reduction by prescribed burning, the incidence, extent, severity and impacts of wildfires on community assets, natural values, biodiversity (and the honey production industry) would be significant;
- the prescribed burning program applied by DEC has ensured that the impact of wildfires on honey production is very low. On average the area of State forest / timber reserves affected by wildfires each year is less than 15,000 hectares or only 0.06% of the DEC-managed estate;
- DEC will attempt to accommodate the needs of honey producers in peak honey flow years by either modifying or delaying some burns that are of lower priority for community protection;
- the Spring burns are generally of very low intensities and have little impact on the tree crowns;
- in its 2004 review of CALM's fire policies and management practices, the Western Australian Environmental Protection Authority recognised that a fuel reduction programme is a key strategy used by CALM (now DEC) to reduce the extent and damage to biodiversity and other assets, which might otherwise be caused by wildfires.

I attach a copy of the document "Place of Fire in the Australian Environment", for your information.

Procedures for contacting beekeepers in the event of a wildfire can also be viewed at <http://www.naturebase.net/content/view/884/905/1/3/>. These procedures (currently under review) have been developed to assist beekeepers in protecting their hives and other property in the event of a wildfire.

I apologise that this information has reached you after the due date for submissions, but hope that it may still be of interest to your Inquiry.

Should you require any further assistance, please don't hesitate to contact either myself, via the contact details listed below, or Sean Bryce - DEC's Apiary Coordinator

With regards

Tracy Shea  
(Chair – Beekeeping Consultative Committee)  
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Parks and Conservation Services  
Department of Environment and Conservation  
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**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION HELD BY THE COMMITTEE**

**ATTACHMENT TO SUBMISSION NO. 84**

**ATTACHMENT:**

Draft Policy Statement No. 41 (Revised) Beekeeping on Public Land