



TASMANIAN HIVES

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6 September 2007

Mr. Bill Pender
Inquiry Secretary
House of Representatives Standing Committee on
Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
PO Box 6021, Parliament House,
CANBERRA, ACT, 2600.

Submission No: 89
Date Received: 7-9-07
Secretary: *[Signature]*

Dear Mr Pender, Please find below a summary of the points discussed at the hearing at Longford on Monday 5th Sep.

I am concerned that in a number of representations it is inferred that Tasmania does not have a Commercial / Professional Managed Pollination Service. Quite the contrary. In 1999 a group of met in Campbell Town in the Midlands and formed an organization with the emphasis on providing professional managed pollination services. Within 12 months it became an incorporated body known as the Tasmanian Crop Pollination Association Inc. (TCPA) with full Ministerial recognition of the Tasmanian Government. Membership is static around 25, which represents all small to medium business in the state but only includes one (1) large commercial operation.

The TCPA has undertaken a skills development activity at least once each year since inception including, business planning, budget planning, costing of pollination services base on historical operating costs, personal development and public speaking. The fees for service which apply in Tasmania are amongst the highest in the country and are reflective of the professional manner in which the associations' members conduct their business and the amount of effort made to ensure the customer gets the best level of service available. During my time as President we developed a Code of Practice (COP) for the Provision of Pollination Services in Tasmania which is presently being considered by the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC) for adoption as the model COP Australia wide.

Since visiting New Zealand in 2002 I have been, like many others, been concerned about the likely hood of an incursion of Varroa Mite into Tasmania. As the President of the National Council of Pollination Associations and their Delegate to ABHIC I lobbied AQIS on the need to improve on the sentinel hive program because we, (Tasmanian pollination providers) know it to be inadequate in the light of the New Zealand experience. Varroa was first found in sentinel hives which surrounded a large International Shipping Container Depot in Auckland. AQIS were not able to assist in the set of a trial Bait Hive Program which would be a more appropriate surveillance system we believe. The emphasis being on catching a swarm which leaves a newly arrived ship thereby avoiding an incursion which will not be detected until the Varroa number build up and migrate to sentinel hives. (Hence the horse has bolted) As a TCPA representative on the Tasmanian Apiary Industry Liaison Committee I sort a grant of \$5,000 from the State Government to assist with the costs to set the trail myself under the auspices of the Department of Primary Industry and Water, (DPIW) with the full cooperation of AQIS and Tasmanian Ports Authority. There are Bait Hives in six of the seven major Ports where we believe we are vulnerable from direct shipping from Asia and New Zealand. The seventh port will be covered soon.

The cost to date has been about \$9600 to set up our program, the additional costs over and above the initial grant have been cover by my business and the day to day costs associated with checking and maintaining the bait hives is met by the volunteers who look after the port in their area. In addition to the set up costs we estimate (DPIW), the attractant pheromones will cost around \$2,000 per year. The programme will be expanded to include Coconut Palm log hives for the Asian Honey Bee as so as Dr Denis Anderson can procure them for us.

Through AQIS we have provided assist to Victoria who I understand are trailing a similar setup. Thank you again for the opportunity to highlight these points.

Yours faithfully

Des Willmott

