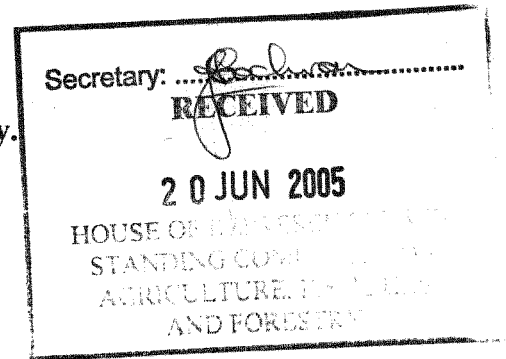


House of Representatives

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

Inquiry into Rural Training and Research

Beekeeping Industry



Personal Submission in Support of the Beekeeping Industry

Australia has a large investment in Agriculture and Horticulture and a considerable export trade based on these industries. There are many inputs into the above, not least, from the beekeeping industry. Bees are necessary, not just because of the direct economic value of around \$1.7 billion, due to their products; honey, beeswax, pollen, royal jelly, propolis, medical or otherwise but because of the immense contribution by the honey bee in the pollination of 60% of Australian food and pasture crops enabling yields to be maximized. There is also an expanding export trade in queenbees and package bees.

There is now some limited research and a little education going on in various places around the country. However, beekeepers and their industry need support in both areas if they are to be able to maintain and increase the economic value to Australia's economy in the 21st century. Australia may be the only OECD country which does not have an institution supporting beekeepers, particularly in research. Some countries, such as USA, UK and Germany have several.

It would be in the national interest that the Commonwealth provide support to establish a research and education centre to increase the collaboration of the beekeeping industry with Horticulture and Agriculture. This should be to the tertiary level. Also assistance in supporting one-on-one education through people like extension officers is also needed. The gradual withdrawal of such people (State Department Officers) has left a considerable vacuum. Assuming a centre for education and research is established, the information then needs to be dispersed efficiently throughout the industry.

Gretchen When's pertinent qualifications and experience are:-

BA - Sydney University

Diploma of Agriculture - Sydney Tech.

50 years beekeeping and queenbee breeding and production.

Collaborator in bee breeding and insemination schools.