



HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Standing Committee on Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry
Inquiry into the future development of the
Australian Honey Bee Industry

MEDIA ALERT

Issued: 27 August 2007

Chair: Alby Schultz MP
Deputy Chair: Dick Adams MP

The best honey in the world

Tasmanians will tell you they make the best honey in the world—honey with the unique flavour and characteristics of the Leatherwood tree, a rainforest species endemic to Tasmania.

Leatherwood is also critical to maintaining hives for crop pollination. It is the essence of the industry in Tasmania. But the industry's access to Leatherwood is under threat. Leatherwood has either been locked away in national parks and wilderness areas, or is subject to logging in state forests. This has implications for food production in Tasmania.

In its submission, the Forests and Forest Industry Council of Tasmania highlighted the importance of access to Leatherwood trees to the honey bee industry, stating: "If most multiple use forest is now accessed to the productive limits of apiarists, and if the pollination industry is entirely dependent on leatherwood to raise hives to efficient pollinating capacity as is claimed by some, there appears to be a limit to which horticulturalists can intensify cropping. Only two changes are possible—more retention of Leatherwood during harvesting to sustain the industry at current levels, or making large areas of Leatherwood in reserves more accessible to commercial beekeepers."

The House of Representatives agriculture committee will meet with representatives of the Tasmanian Government and Tasmanian beekeepers at its next public hearing in **Longford**, on **3 September 2007**, commencing at **9 am** and concluding at **12.30 pm**.

The committee notes that, to their credit, both government and industry in Tasmania have sought to resolve the problem of resource access for the honey bee industry. The committee is keen to learn of the success of these initiatives and the future prospects of the industry in Tasmania.

Committee chair, Alby Schultz said: "The honey bee industry in Tasmania appears to be an example of what can be done if governments, the honey bee industry and the forestry industry work together for their mutual benefit. Are they an example for the rest of Australia? That is what we are going to find out."

Witnesses include representatives of the Tasmanian Beekeepers' Association (Submission 63), Tasmanian Crop Pollination Association (Submission 70), Forests and Forest Industry Council of Tasmania (Submission 80), and the Tasmanian Department of Primary Industries and Water (Submission 72).

PUBLIC HEARING—Honey Bee Inquiry—Longford, Tasmania, Monday 3 September 2007

WHERE: Racecourse Inn, 114 Marlborough St, Longford, Tasmania
WHEN: Monday, 3 September 2007, 9am–12.30pm

Public and media most welcome

For media comment: please contact the committee chair, Alby Schultz MP, on (02) 4822 2277 (02) 6277 4386 or email Alby.Schultz.MP@aph.gov.au.

For background information, including the terms of reference, contact the committee secretariat on (02) 6277 4500 or at Aff.reps@aph.gov.au or visit the inquiry website at www.aph.gov.au/house/committee/primind/

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