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| <b>NATIONAL MANAGEMENT<br/>GROUP</b> | <b>MEETING NUMBER:</b> xxx  |
|                                      | <b>LOCATION:</b> Teleconference<br><b>DATE:</b> 31 January 2011<br><b>TIME:</b> 2.00 pm |
| <b>AGENDA PAPER</b>                  | <b>ITEM:</b> xx   |

## CCEPP review of the Asian Honey Bee (AHB) eradication program

**FOR DECISION**

### RECOMMENDATIONS

1. That the National Management Group (NMG):
  - a. **NOTES** that the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests (CCEPP) convened on 25 January 2011 to consider the technical feasibility of eradication of Asian honey bee from Australia, taking into account the current situation and a plan from Queensland for a proposed six months of activities from the beginning of January 2011 (Attachment 1) and the outcomes of the epidemiological review by AusVet Animal Health Services in October 2010 (Attachment 2);
  - b. **NOTES** that at its meeting on 29 October 2010 the CCEPP met to consider the draft AusVet report and were unable to reach consensus as CCEPP members held mixed views on the feasibility of eradication of AHB;
  - c. **NOTES** that on 25 January 2011 the CCEPP agreed that the positions of each contributing jurisdiction, including industry, would be presented to NMG for consideration as there is no immediate likelihood that consensus will be reached on the technical feasibility of successful eradication of AHB or the Queensland plan for actions to gather more information to support such a decision by the end of June 2011;

### ISSUES

1. On 23 April 2010 Primary Industries Ministerial Council (PIMC) agreed to fund the continuation of the Asian Honey Bee eradication program until 31 December 2010. In December 2010, PIMC agreed to a further three months extension of funding to continue the program until 31 March 2011 to allow for NMG consideration of the technical feasibility of eradication.
2. At its meeting on 25 January 2011, the CCEPP agreed to present NMG with jurisdiction positions in relation to the technical feasibility of eradication, positions in relation to supporting the Queensland action plan for January to June 2011 and views on what the plan will deliver since consensus on the former was not likely to be reached. These are summarised in Table 1.
3. Background information referenced by CCEPP included the AusVet Animal Health Services review of the program, noting that this recommends the collection of further data on which technical feasibility of eradication can be assessed; the proposal from Queensland; a technical paper from Roger Paskin (Victoria) assessing eradicability of the bee; and the summary outcomes of the CCEPP workshop on AHB convened in Canberra on 29 October 2010.

4. At the October 2010 workshop, participants analysed factors to consider when assessing technical feasibility of eradication that are summarised in Appendix 12 of PlantPlan. These include factors favouring eradication and those favouring alternative action. These are summarised in Table 2.

**Table 1: Jurisdiction consideration of technical feasibility of eradication of AHB and position in relation to the proposed actions on AHB from January to June 2011.**

| <b>Jurisdiction</b> | <b>Is eradication of AHB technically feasible?</b> | <b>Position in relation to support of the proposed Action Plan</b>  | <b>Consideration in what Action Plan will deliver</b>  |
|---------------------|--|---|--|
| <b>NSW</b>          | No   | Wouldn't be supportive of spending more money to get additional information.                                    | Have concerns that the program has been going for a long time and still finding a lot of swarms.   |
| <b>Vic</b>          | No   | Appreciative of Qld intentions but too expensive and not optimal time for surveillance.                         | Need more pointed outcomes.  |
| <b>ACT</b>          | No   | Understand intentions but don't know if assumptions are correct.  | Outcomes may be too unrealistic.   |
| <b>Tas</b>          | No   | Good plan and would gather more information but would not be in any better position to determine eradicability. | Does not focus on epidemiology.  |
| <b>SA</b>           | Yes  | Supports Plan – Option 1.   | Information collected over next six months will provide data for epidemiological determination on whether AHB technically feasible to eradicate. |
| <b>WA</b>           | No   | Unlikely to be in better position to determine eradicability.   | Plan outcomes are unlikely to provide confidence that eradication is achievable.   |
| <b>NT</b>           | Yes  | Supportive of Plan and program continuing.  | Plan will provide data so that determination can be made about eradication.  |
| <b>Qld</b>          | Yes  | Support Plan.   | Plan will get the information needed for final decision.   |
| <b>AHBIC</b>        | Yes  | Support Plan.   | Plan will deliver vital information for eradication of AHB.  |
| <b>AG</b>           | No   | Plan would provide information for evaluation of the program.   | Actions will assist with delimitation but not provide confidence whether AHB can be eradicated.  |

**Table 2: Summary of analysis of factors favouring eradication or alternative actions (Ref. Appendix 12, PlantPlan)**

| <b>Factors favouring eradication</b>   | <b>AHB considerations</b>   |
|--|---|
| Cost/benefit analysis shows significant economic loss to industry or the community if the organism establishes.        | BCA not yet finalised, assumptions on industry impact reviewed  |
| Physical barriers and/or discontinuity of hosts between production districts.  | No. Major risks spread to north and south   |
| Cost effective control difficult to achieve (e.g. limited availability of protectant or curative treatments).          | Mixed – baits, spray, traps are available to destroy hives, however further development of their effective delivery is needed<br><br>Broader strategy to protect pollination and secure biosecurity outcomes not in place |
| The generation time, population dynamics and dispersal of the organism favour more restricted spread and distribution. | No  |
| Pest biocontrol agents not known or recorded in Australia.   | No  |
| Vectors discontinuous and can be effectively controlled.   | Bee-related vectors controlled, others such as containers, trucks, trains not regulated but under voluntary management  |
| Outbreak(s) few and confined.  | 340 swarms or nests to 24 January 2011. As bees are social animals, infective agents are nests, not individual bees<br><br>Large areas not populated meaning there is little passive surveillance                         |
| Trace back information indicates few opportunities for secondary spread.   | No  |
| Weather records show unfavourable conditions for pest development.   | No  |
| Ease of access to outbreak site and location of alternate hosts.   | No  |
| <b>Factors favouring alternative action</b>  | <b>AHB considerations</b>   |
| Cost/benefit analysis shows relatively low economic or environmental impact if the                                     | BCA not yet finalised, assumptions on industry impact reviewed  |

|   |  |
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| organism establishes.   |  |
| Major areas of continuous production of host plants.  | Yes  |
| Cost effective control strategies available   | Yes  |
| Short generation times, potential for rapid population growth and long distance dispersal lead to rapid establishment and spread. | Generation time and dispersal makes for population doubling every 4 months - can fly and form hives and fly on (can take 5-10 km leaps |
| Widespread populations of known pest biocontrol agents present in Australia   | No   |
| Vectors unknown, continuous or difficult to control.  | Has propensity to hitch-hike; spread is not restricted; (can form nests on objects of trade) risk of assisted spread                   |
| Outbreaks numerous and widely dispersed   | Refer above  |
| Trace back information indicates extensive opportunities for secondary spread.  | Yes  |
| Weather records show unfavourable conditions for pest development.  | No   |
| Weather records show optimum conditions for pest development.   | Yes, but may be some seasonal variation  |
| Terrain difficult and/or problems accessing and locating host plants  | Yes  |

## BACKGROUND

### *Asian Honey Bees incursion*

The Asian honey bee was detected in Portsmith, Cairns in 2007. An emergency response under the Emergency Animal Disease Response Agreement commenced. The pest was thought to have been successfully eradicated by the end of 2007 but a further nest was discovered in July 2008 around 7 km to the south of the previous outbreak.

A response was resumed with a focus on detection and destruction of AHB swarms and nests. A total of 340 swarms and nests had been found and destroyed to 24 January 2011.

Management of AHB was transferred from EADRA to the Emergency Plant Pest Response Deed in September 2010 and the Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests met in October 2010 to receive a comprehensive briefing on the program and to discuss draft outcomes from the AusVet review of technical feasibility of eradication. The CCEPP considered that additional information may inform the question of eradication and this was taken into account in most recent discussions along with the current outbreak situation and program outcomes.

## **CONSULTATION**

All Australian governments and the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council were consulted in the preparation of this paper.

## **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The CCEPP did not consider financial matters at its teleconference as this is outside the scope of the Committee.

Prepared by: Consultative Committee on Emergency Plant Pests

Date: 25 January 2011

## **ATTACHMENTS**

Attachment 1: Proposed Activities for *Apis cerana* in North Queensland January to June 2011

Attachment 2: Eradicability of Asian Honey Bees in Queensland – AusVet Animal Health Services