



Department of  
**AGRICULTURE  
FISHERIES &  
FORESTRY -  
AUSTRALIA**



6 June 2002

## **ANIMAL BIOSECURITY POLICY MEMORANDUM 2002/29**

### **IMPORT RISK ANALYSIS – HONEY BEE SEMEN COMMENCEMENT ADVICE**

This Animal Biosecurity Policy Memorandum (ABPM) advises stakeholders of the commencement of an Import Risk Analysis (IRA) on the importation of semen of the honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) and seeks public comment on Animal Biosecurity's proposed scope, indicative timetable and approach. Comments by 8 July 2002 would be appreciated.

This ABPM is to advise you that Animal Biosecurity has received requests from the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council to develop conditions for the importation of honey bee semen. The imported product would be used for genetic improvement programs in commercial honey bee breeding enterprises in Australia. It will also provide counter-seasonal trade opportunities for honey bee exports.

The access request requires an IRA to develop appropriate quarantine policy.

It is a high priority because access to overseas honey bee genetics through semen is expected to provide a more cost effective alternative than the existing policy of the importation of queen bees. Resources are now available within Animal Biosecurity for the IRA.

Animal Biosecurity considers that this IRA is not likely to require assessment of quarantine risks not previously considered in the development of the existing quarantine policy for importation of queen honey bees. Further, Animal Biosecurity's view is that the importation of semen should present an inherently lower quarantine risk than importation of live queen honey bees as semen is not a commodity via which exotic acarine parasites (*eg* varroa, tropilaelaps or tracheal mites) would gain entry to Australia.

Stakeholders will be aware that the IRA process is under review (the last consultation on the draft 'Administrative Framework for IRAs' closed on 15 November 2001). Considering the advanced stage of the review, and that the suggested changes have generally been supported, we propose at this point the IRA follow the revised process as set out in the draft Framework document.

#### **Scope**

The analysis will consider the importation of semen of the honey bee (*Apis mellifera*) from all countries.



Edmund Barton Building  
Barton ACT  
GPO Box 858  
Canberra ACT 2601  
ph +61 2 6272 3933  
fax +61 2 6272 5161  
[www.affa.gov.au](http://www.affa.gov.au)

ABN 24 113 085 695

## **Indicative Timetable**

We estimate that the IRA process will take approximately 18 months to two years to complete. If there are no unanticipated delays, we would expect to release the technical issues paper by September 2002.

## **IRA Team**

Animal Biosecurity considers that it has the required technical expertise to conduct this risk analysis. We propose a team of Veterinary Officers from within Animal Biosecurity should conduct the IRA. The team has experience in a range of relevant diseases, epidemiology and risk analysis, and has developed relevant expertise through similar analyses. As mentioned above, the IRA is not expected to be technically complex, ie it is not likely to require consideration of quarantine risks not previously considered, and there is existing policy for the importation of queen honey bees.

## **Your comments are invited**

You are invited to comment on the proposed scope of the IRA, the indicative timetable and the proposal to use an in-house team. Your response by 8 July 2002 would be appreciated. We will take your comments into consideration in making recommendations to the Executive Manager of Biosecurity Australia.

You may also wish to provide names and details of relevant expertise for those whom Animal Biosecurity might involve in the analysis. We also offer you the opportunity for you to provide details of any technical issues that you believe we may not be aware of, and that will need consideration during, the IRA.

We would be grateful if you would pass details of this notice to other interested parties, who should advise Animal Biosecurity if they wish to be included in future communications on this matter. Inquiries should be directed to the officer whose contact details appear below.

## **Confidentiality**

Respondents are advised that, subject to the *Freedom of Information Act 1982* and the *Privacy Act 1988*, all submissions received in response to Plant Biosecurity Policy Memoranda will be publicly available and may be listed or referred to in any papers or reports prepared on the subject matter of the memoranda.

The Commonwealth reserves the right to reveal the identity of a respondent unless a request for anonymity accompanies the submission. Where a request for anonymity does not accompany the submission the respondent will be taken to have consented to the disclosure of his or her identity for the purposes of Information Privacy Principle 11 of the Privacy Act.

The contents of the submission will not be treated as confidential unless they are marked 'confidential' and they are capable of being classified as such in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act.

DAVID BANKS  
General Manager  
Animal Biosecurity

Contact officer: Warren Vant  
Telephone no: (02) 6272 4436  
Facsimile no: (02) 6272 3399  
E-mail [warren.vant@affa.gov.au](mailto:warren.vant@affa.gov.au)