



31 August 2012

BIOSECURITY ADVICE 2012/19

BIOSECURITY POLICY FOR QUEEN HONEY BEES

This Biosecurity Advice informs stakeholders that the Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry has finalised a biosecurity policy for the importation of queen honey bees. Importation of queen honey bees may be permitted subject to the *Quarantine Act 1908*, and the application of sanitary measures as specified in the Review of the importation of queen honey bees. The policy will be taken into account by decision makers when considering import permit applications for queen honey bees from approved countries in accordance with the *Quarantine Act 1908* and *Quarantine Proclamation 1998* as amended, effective from 31 August 2012.


The Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry (DAFF) has completed a policy review of the importation of queen honey bees. A draft policy review was issued on 29 February 2012 for a 60-day consultation period, which was extended and closed on 14 May 2012 (BA 2012/04).

DAFF considered all of the stakeholder comments and the following changes were made to produce the final policy review:

- Small hive beetle, American foulbrood and European foulbrood were removed as hazards of biosecurity concern from Chapter 6 of the *Importation of queen honey bees: Final policy review* titled: *Requirements for the importation of queen honey bees*.
- The phorid fly, *Apocephalus borealis*, was identified as a hazard and subjected to risk assessment. The unrestricted risk estimate of this agent was assessed as 'negligible' and, therefore, no specific risk management measures were considered necessary.
- The section on Australian emergency disease plans was rewritten to reflect the transfer of responsibility for honey bee pests and diseases from Animal Health Australia to Plant Health Australia.
- Although islands in the Torres Strait, adjacent to Papua New Guinea, administered by Australia, have *Varroa jacobsoni*-infested Asian honey bees, Australia remains free of varroa. The language used to describe Australia's varroa status has been changed to better reflect that position.
- A number of editorial changes were made, based on stakeholder comments.

Following completion of the policy review, imports of queen honey bees from approved countries will be able to resume under specific quarantine conditions, effective from 31 August 2012.

The final policy review report is available on the DAFF website, www.daff.gov.au/ba.



Andrew Cupit
Assistant Secretary
Animal Biosecurity