

# **NATIONAL BEEKEEPERS ASSOCIATION OF NEW ZEALAND (INC.)**

## **Remits** **AGM 2001**

### **NB:**

*The remits are being circulated in the order they have been received. Presentation order and numbering at the AGM may well differ.*

### **Remits from Bay of Plenty Branch**

#### **Remit 1.**

That this Conference recommends to the Executive that each Branch receive a grant each year and that the grant is not less than 1 1/2% of the total levy and Ordinary membership fees collected from that branch.

#### **Rationale**

This would have the effect of providing branch capitation which would directly relate to the income generated to for the NBA from the branch, and would equate, based on the 1999 accounts, to a total \$5,850 total capitation to branches. This is approximately the amount provided to branches in previous years.

#### **Remit 2.**

That this Conference recommends to the Executive that they make a request to Government for an increase in the number of Apicultural Advisory Officers with AgriQuality.

#### **Rationale**

In the early 1970's there were approximately 17 apicultural staff to service our industry's requirements. Today there is the equivalent of only 4 to 5 full time apicultural staff. With the Varroa mite present in New Zealand this has created an even heavier workload for the current few Apicultural Advisory Officers and their effectiveness in assisting the beekeeping industry to help control the mite will be affected.

#### **Remit 3.**

That this Conference recommends to Executive that the Beekeeper magazine be published six times only per year.

#### **Rationale**

This would give additional funds per issue, which would allow for an improvement in content and quality.

#### **Remit 4**

That this Conference recommends to Executive that AgriQuality remain responsible for the maintenance of the Apiary Register.

#### **Remit 5**

That this Conference recommends to Executive that persons appointed as Authorised Persons (Level 1) under the Pest Management Strategy is from an independent agency only.

#### **Remit 6**

That this Conference recommends to Executive that this industry express its total opposition to the use of Imidacloprid (Gaucho).

## **Remit from Southland Branch**

### **Remit 7**

That this conference recommends to the Executive that they take the needed steps to ensure the antibiotic *tetracycline* is registered with the appropriate authorities for use in New Zealand beehives in the event that European Foulbrood is declared endemic in New Zealand.

#### **Rationale**

1. The Southland Branch wishes to promote discussion on this topic.
2. The normal time frame to register a substance with the Animal Remedies Board can be measured in years. We were fortunate to be able to fast track the registration of *Apistan* in six months but even that shortened time period gave Varroa a head start. Any registration could/would require a ministerial "sign off" in the event that EFB were declared endemic in NZ.

## **Remits from Otago Branch**

### **Remit 8**

"That this Conference recommends to the Executive that, The NBA commission an investigation into the options available for the treatment and or eradication of European Foulbrood in New Zealand."

#### **Rationale**

Overseas research and experience may suggest a range of options available if EFB arrives in NZ. Treatment with antibiotics brings with it some other problems. If there are viable alternatives to treating with antibiotics, we need to weigh up the choices before we are in a crisis situation.

### **Remit 9**

That this Conference recommends to the Executive that they ensure that any policies adopted by them are formulated in accordance with the provisions and spirit of the Rules of the Association and comply with governing legislation.

#### **Rationale**

The formulation of policies by the executive is accepted management practice. However on at least two occasions over the past year, the executive have adopted policies which are in conflict either with the accepted interpretations of the NBA rules or Regulations under which our Association is required to operate. These occasions concerned a policy on the enforcement of the Pest Management Strategy for AFB, and policy concerning the acceptance of remits to the conference of Delegates.

## **Remits from Canterbury Branch**

### **Remit 10**

This conference recommends to the Executive that the cost of EU Residue testing be directed to and funded from the Honey Marketing Committee

### **Remit 11**

This conference recommends to Executive on behalf of the New Zealand Hobbyist Beekeepers that Executive negotiates with Government for the removal of the Statutory Declaration clause

Footnote - ADR should be recognised as an official document of their hobbyist status

### **Remits from Southern North Island Branch**

#### **Remit 12**

That this conference recommends to the Executive that the marketing committee presents to the AGM of the NBA, a report that shows expenditure for projects for the ensuing 12 months for delegates to vote on.

#### **Remit 13**

That this conference recommends to the Executive that they establish template contracts to be available to beekeepers for the purchase/selling of bees, hive products and services.

### **Remit from the Northland Branch**

#### **Remit 14**

That the line between the buffer and infested zones be maintained and defended for as long as possible and, if Varroa is found south of the line, the line be shifted to a sensible geographical line."

#### **Rationale:**

Maintaining and defending the line between the buffer and infested zones is one of the most important things that can be done to slow down the spread of Varroa to the South Island.

It is critically important that MAF defend the line and ensure that adequate resources are expended to ensure that beekeepers do not breach the line. It is important that the beekeeping industry demonstrate its resolve and determination to slow the spread of Varroa. This determination will send a clear signal to MAF that the line is important and must be defended. This remit may also send an important message to the few renegade beekeepers who seem determined to breach the line.

Those beekeepers who have Varroa know how devastating Varroa is and how important it is that its spread be slowed as much as possible. It is clear that the Government is not going to provide free Varroa treatment in the future, consequently those beekeepers are going to be at a disadvantage.

### **Remits from the Waikato Branch**

#### **Remit 15**

That this Conference recommends to Executive that they facilitate the development of clover that produces Nectar and persists for many years in pasture.

#### **Rationale**

Beekeepers in the northern half of New Zealand have been noticing a decline in the production of clover honey. We have been very quick to blame one agent for causing this decline e.g. the advance of the clover root weevil down the country, the overuse of Urea on pastures that have decreased clover growth. One other factor that was brought to our attention after a presentation from an Environment Waikato employee was that pugging in pastures could also be a contributing factor - extending the regeneration time of pasture.

Many of us have had discussions with farmers who are becoming more aware that pollination of clover is not happening. We believe that it would be beneficial to work with organisations to get them to produce a suitable clover plant that will have the desired growth characteristics for the

farmer and will produce nectar to ensure bee visitation to ensure that seed production does occur.

We would then be able to put a package together (in collaboration with regional councils and Ag Research) that would point out to farmers an alternative to Urea application, that will help create a lower cost and more environmentally friendly way of maintaining pasture production (there would be less Nitrate poisoning, less nitrogen runoff into waterways)

#### Remit 16

That this Conference recommends to Executive that they seek a Government enquiry into the handling of the Varroa Situation.

#### Rationale

With differing viewpoints currently in the industry we believe that it would be a chance to clear the air and for all sides to be able to put forward their case. We would request a breakdown of Expenses in relation to the funds allocated by Government for the entire Varroa Management.

### **Remits from Auckland Branch**

#### Remit 17

That this Conference recommends to the Executive, that they consider that the following become an essential memorandum for all future Conference procedure: -

That Delegates be asked at the opening of the Remit Session, to respond to the question: - "Are Branches satisfied with the Exotic Bee Disease Surveillance that has been carried out in the past 12 months?" If a Branch Delegate replies in the negative, then that Delegate must give reason/s. The Executive should then take note of such reason/s and act appropriately.

#### Rationale

On 10/11 April 2000, the discovery of Varroa Mite in Auckland, brought home the realisation that Border Control had failed and routine Exotic Bee Surveillance had been woefully inadequate, given that Varroa must have been in the region for about 18 months to 2 years. This unhappy situation had arisen because successive Governments had reduced funding for Bio-Security, despite an ever-increasing traffic through our Airports and ports, and more deplorably Exotic Disease Surveillance had been reduced to a few 100 x 400ml polyjars of bee samples.

However it appears that the beekeeping industry, may have got what it did not very energetically prevent, through lobbying government and Bureaucracy. In short, we did not question, accepted the status quo, became complacent and are now paying the price. This must never happen again.

The Remit will cause every Branch every year to question and examine the current surveillance situation and in effect, will become 14 review committees.

Our Branch feels that we must have better Border Control to remain clear of the numerous exotic diseases and pests which have not yet arrived.

#### Remit 18

That this Conference recommends to the Executive that they consider the introduction of Varroa tolerant bee stock to the New Zealand Beekeeping industry, to reduce the effect of Varroa and improve the economics of the beekeeping industry.

#### Rationale

Our branch feels that we should investigate the potential for setting up a selection programme to select Varroa resistant bees so as to provide these to the industry.

To also investigate the potential for setting up an importation and selection programme to select for Varroa resistant bees and provide these for the industry.

And to investigate the revision of the import health standards, with the view of making them easier to safely comply with.

#### Remit 19

That this Conference recommends to the Executive that the Beeping Industry endeavour to co-ordinate rural industries to speak with one voice to increase pressure on the Government to provide better border security.

#### Remit 20

That this Conference recommends to the Executive, that an approach be made to the Government to get all incoming containers opened and their contents inspected, to control the importation of exotic diseases and pests, such as is believed being put into practice in Australia.

#### Rationale

It alarms the Auckland Branch members on how many interceptions, recently reported in an article originating from the Right Honourable Jim Sutton, are being made by Border Control, from overseas travellers entering New Zealand.

The many incidents of pest escaping and the costs in attempting to eradicate these same pests are becoming astronomical and so acute, that eventually we will lose our precious "Clean Green Image" as well as accumulating all of the worlds pests.

#### Remit 21

That this Conference asks the Executive to bring to the notice of all relevant departments, "That all Government Departments, including MAF and those responsible for Border Control, should be controlled by the same rules as we the public are, in that in 1999, huge costs were placed on New Zealand and all Beekeepers by being lax in allowing the entry of Varroa Mite through their Border Control, which we believe is contained in their contract.

#### Rationale

There is a MAF paper out which says that Beekeepers can be given 5 years prison and/or a fine of \$100,000.00 if they break the certain rules with regard to Varroa Infestation Control, yet they themselves in 1999 lost 109 samples which our Branch together with the Waikato Branch had collected during a surveillance exercise organised by MAF and AgriQuality, which seven months later was found to be heavily infected and in fact was dying from Varroa Mite Infestation for which the MAF had been contacted, which should have been tested we believe, for exotic diseases and pests.

The contract of the testing has not been released by MAF, even though requested through the Official Information Act.

### **Remit from the Varroa Oversight Advisory Committee (VOAC)**

#### Remit 22

That the line between the buffer and infected zones be maintained and defended for as long as possible and, if Varroa is found south of the line, the line be shifted to a sensible geographical line.

#### Rationale

The "line" as established by MAF, in consultation with the representatives of those beekeepers in areas most affected, is an integral element in slowing the spread of Varroa into areas to the south, including the South Island.

As such the line is fully in accordance with the Cabinet determination, spelled out by the Minister of Agriculture in his communiqué dated, 6 November 2000, " the aim of the plan (approved by Cabinet) was to keep the South Island Varroa free for as long as realistically possible, and to minimise the economic impacts in the North Island."

Maintaining and defending the line, between the buffer and infested zones, is seen as an essential tool in achieving the Cabinet's objective to limit the southward spread of Varroa mite into areas currently unaffected.

It is, therefore, critically important the MAF defend the line and, further, ensure that adequate financial and technical resources are made available to ensure the integrity of the line is not breached.

It is no less important for the beekeeping industry, nationally, to demonstrate its resolve and determination to slow the spread of Varroa into otherwise (at present) clean areas for as long as practicable. This is demonstrated by respecting the line and the reasons for its existence.

Such determination will send a clear signal to Government that the line is strategically important and must be defended. Furthermore, this will show that the beekeeping industry is a responsible body and that by reinforcing the line, is prepared to honour its part in the overall partnership between Government and industry.