

Industry Article

Apiary Industry Liaison Officer training delivered

Agriculture Victoria, in partnership with the Australian Honey Bee Industry Council (AHBIC), recently delivered nationally accredited training to 17 honey bee industry beekeeper representatives from across Australia.

The training, delivered over two days at Agriculture Victoria's State Biosecurity Operations Centre, focussed on preparing select industry beekeepers to perform the vital function of Industry Liaison Officer (ILO) in the event of a honey bee emergency response, such as a varroa mite incursion.

During a honey bee emergency response - which can go on for many months - the ILO is an essential role that supports an Incident Management Team (IMT) within government (national, state or territory), making decisions that consider industry's needs.

With similar training undertaken more than 10 years ago, the updated training was welcomed by AHBIC and industry beekeeper participants.

AHBIC Chair Peter McDonald attended in person and introduced participants to the training, expressing the importance of improving the industry's capacity to perform the ILO function effectively when and where required.

"The importance of this ILO training is essentially about building our capacity to work more effectively with governments when they are leading emergency responses.

"In order for this to happen we need a national and consistent approach and an understanding of what is expected from ILOs representing our honey bee industry when working within an emergency response situation," he said.

Key ILO training components delivered over the two days included;

- The roles, functions and expectations of ILOs
- The Industry Biosecurity Plan: Threat Specific Contingency Plan (Varroa mites)
- Incident Management Systems/Structures
- Real-time learning scenario sessions focussing on ILO functions within an IMT structure, specifically performing the role and working within planning, operations and public information.

A representative from Plant Health Australia attended the training as an observer.

For more information you can contact Leading Apiary Officer Daniel Martin on 0428 752 449 or AHBIC on (07) 5467 2265.