

AFB PMP Management Agency Board Meeting Minutes

Date: 8 April 2020

Location: Video Conference

ATTENDANCE

Present

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| Mr John Hartnell | (Chairman) |
| Mr Jason Ward | |
| Ms Kim Poynter | |
| Mr Russell Marsh | |
| Mr Gabriel Torres | |
| Hayley Pragert | |
| Val Graham | |
| Mr Clifton King | (National Compliance Manager) |

Guests

| | |
|-------------------|---|
| Mr Byron Taylor | AsureQuality (item 4) |
| Mr Mike Harre | Ministry for Primary Industries (items 2 & 3) |
| Mr Marco Gonzalez | Management Agency (items 4 & 5) |

1. Meeting opening

1.1. Chairman's welcome

John Hartnell welcomed everyone to the meeting.

1.2. Apologies

John Walsh is an apology as he is seconded to the Ministry of Health COVID-19 team.

1.3. Director conflict of interest disclosures

John requested Board members to advise Clifton on any updates to the Interest Register via email after the meeting.

1.4. Previous Minutes

1.4.1. Confirmation

The draft February Board meeting minutes were approved subject to the following changes:

- Change the reference for pre 2018/19 accounting practices to "previous accounting practices"

1.4.2. Action list

Clifton advised the Board on action list progress. Key discussion/action points are as follows:

- The next AP2 training session (to deliver cultural competency training) is likely to be delayed until 2021 as a result of COVID-19
- The status of the action item to advise clubs of the opportunity to run training courses was revised from “closed” to “pending”, i.e. after the COVID-19 alert levels have sufficiently dropped.

2. National Compliance Managers Report

Clifton presented the National Compliance Managers report. He advised of two updates since he had written his report:

- The deadline for RFP responses had been extended from 6 April 2020 to 9 April 2020 to give vendors additional time to respond in recognition of disruptions associated with COVID-19.
- The Management Agency was investigating installing softphones on staff laptops as this provided landline functionality that is portable (as is required in the current COVID-19 environment).

Key matters arising from discussion of the report are described as follows:

Clifton advised that NZ Beekeeping Inc had requested that the Management Agency offer beekeepers the opportunity to pay the levy by instalment, and that the Management Agency advise beekeepers that it wasn't going to audit beekeepers colony returns in light of difficulties associated with COVID-19.

Clifton advised that neither new nor previous levy orders provided the Management Agency with the authority to collect the levy by instalment. The Board agreed that the Management Agency should continue to consider levy payment arrangements for cases of financial hardship on a case by case basis as it did last year.

Clifton advised that the Management Agency was not planning to randomly audit beekeepers colony returns, and instead was focussing its efforts on investigating beekeepers that had unusually high reductions in the number of honey bee colonies – as these are potentially fraudulent. The Board agreed with the approach to monitoring beekeeper updates to beehive numbers and Colony Returns and agreed that no additional communications were required.

The Board questioned the decision to suspend AP2 inspections because of COVID-19 alert level 4. Clifton advised that while the Management Agency is an essential business and can continue to inspect apiaries, the Minister had made it very clear to the entire primary sector that preventing COVID-19 infections was the absolute priority. Clifton advised that the impact of a 4-week delay to AP2 inspections was minimal, however the impact would increase significantly if delayed beyond 4 weeks.

The Board directed that AP2 inspections should resume as soon as possible and after the Management Agency has:

- Developed clear policy and procedures to prevent the transmission of COVID-19 while inspecting apiaries, and
- Obtained evidence, via signed forms, that AP2s had read and understood their new COVID-19 prevention obligations under this policy and procedures.

Discussion of progress implementing the transition plan resulted in suggestions to investigate QJumpers for advertising the Operations Manager position, and Spoke phone system enhancement.

The Board discussed the possibility to of delivering AFB Recognition course online in response to the COVID-19 situation. Clifton agreed that this should be addressed after the peak workload associated with implementing the transition plan and developing the NBHS had subsided.

3. AQ Contract transition plan

Clifton briefed the Board on the transition plan. He advised that the detailed planning for the communications project had yet to occur and that this plan was dependent on the detail of the contract extension agreed with AsureQuality. Matters arising from the Boards discussion of the transition plan are listed as follows:

Blueprint Design

- Beekeepers that email discontinued email address's should receive an autoreply advising them of the correct email address to use, i.e. the discontinued email address shouldn't simply forward their email for them.
- Beekeepers should be notified of both rob out notices and AFB cases by SMS message

Recruitment and Induction Project

- The organisational chart should state that the National Operations Manager will be the Acting National Compliance Manager in the National Compliance Managers absence
- A 3-month review should be conducted 3 months after new staff members start

Communications Project

- The communications channels need to be user friendly for beekeepers

AQ Contract Extension Project

- The agreed contract extension should include provision for the Management Agency to extend the contract if required.

FMIS Migration Project

- Investigate resolving the "Funds Settled" line item as part of updating the Chart of Accounts

4. Operations Reports

4.1. Operations Manager Report

Marco asked the Board if they had questions about his report. Substantive discussions and decisions arising are noted below.

The Board enquired as to whether the beekeeper that had destroyed another beekeeper's apiary without authority had received written advice that his behaviour was not appropriate and is a criminal offense. The Board directed that the beekeeper should be advised in writing and should explicitly state that the Management Agency did not authorise his actions.

The Board discussed the approach to completing and recovering the costs of a compliance operation. The Board confirmed that the compliance operation should be completed and that the approach should be consistent with previous compliance operations.

4.2. AQ Bimonthly Report

Byron presented the AQ Bimonthly report to the Board. He advised that a patch to resolve an issue with the Colony Return functionality on ApiWeb would be released in the next couple of days. He also advised that planned Health and Safety improvements for inspectors working out of cell phone range for the Exotics program would also be available for AFB.

Substantive discussions and decisions are noted below.

The Board noted the very low incidence of AFB in the Manawatu-Wanganui region, 0.09%, and enquired whether this was real or a reporting anomaly. Clifton noted that the reports also stated that AP2s had not found any AFB in the region either. Marco advised that this was incorrect. He was aware of at least three cases of AFB found by AP2s in the regions where the data had not transferred from Collector back into the Apiary Database.

Byron undertook to investigate what had happened with the data for these three cases and other instances advised by Marco.

The Board noted the low number of DECA approvals over the last two months. It was agreed that communications should be sent to beekeepers that are eligible for a DECA but have yet to apply for one promoting the benefits of applying for a DECA.

The Board asked Byron about the report on the CoI status of commercial beekeepers that did not have a DECA. Byron stated that he had completed this and undertook to send this to Clifton.

5. Matters for Discussion

5.1. Health and Safety Report

Clifton presented the Health and Safety Report. No incidents or near misses were reported for the period.

The Board had a substantive discussion about the approach the Management Agency had taken to modifying its operations to protect the health of staff, contractors and beekeepers during the COVID-19 outbreak. The Board noted some conflicting advice provided by different government departments and agreed that the Management Agency's approach should be consistent with Ministry of Health directives and advice.

The Board confirmed that all AP2s are required to sign-off that they have read and understood the new COVID-19 policy and procedure before they resume inspections. They also confirmed the importance of notifying the occupier of the land that the apiaries were on prior to inspection.

5.2. 2019/20 YTD Finance Report

Clifton presented the YTD Finance report to the Board. The impact of COVID-19 has increased the level of uncertainty in the forecast and the Management Agency now is forecast to break even. This is an improvement from the operating loss of \$59,602 forecast at the February Board meeting in response to maintaining tight control over expenditure, the impact of COVID-19 and recognition that certain expenditures that was previously forecast will not occur.

Clifton advised that in light of the Boards decision today to restart AP2 inspections a small deficit of approximately \$20,000 was likely for the 2019/20 financial year.

5.3. Training Report

Clifton presented the Training report to the Board and highlighted that training had been suspended in response to COVID-19.

The Board noted that the Management Agency should bring forward its plans to introduce online training in response to COVID-19.

5.4. Complaints Report

Clifton presented the Complaints Report. The Board enquired whether the beekeeper that had complained had received a written response. Clifton undertook to check with Marco.

6. Matters for noting

The establishment of the Christchurch office was discussed given the COVID-19 environment. The establishment of this office is on hold pending moving to alert level 1.

7. Meeting finalisation

Next meeting Friday 5 June 2020

Meeting closed 2:35pm Wednesday 8 April 2020.