

CONFIRMED MINUTES

NOVEMBER 2024 THE MANAGEMENT AGENCY BOARD MEETING (IN PERSON)

Name:	The Management Agency National American Foulbrood Pest Management Plan
Date:	Friday, 15 November 2024
Time:	9:00 am to 4:15 pm (NZDT)
Location:	Moana Room (Willeston Conference Centre), Level 11, 15 Willeston Street, Wellington Central
Board Members:	Mark Dingle (Chair), Hayley Praghert, Jane Rollin, Lubomir Dudek, Murray Elwood, Trent Proffit, Val Graham
Attendees:	Dwayne Hill, Janette Gwilliam, Marco Gonzalez, Mike Harre, Niha Long, Afu Aleva
Apologies:	John Sanson
Guests/Notes:	Karin Cos, Nathan Guy

1. Welcome

1.1 Opening Karakia

The GM opened the meeting with a karakia.

2. Board Only Session

2.1 Board Only Session

3. Updates from MPI

3.1 Updates from MPI on NPMP review

Updates from Afu Aleva

- Biosecurity Act 1993 review: Due date for public submissions for the consultations has been extended to 13 December 2025. Will send a thorough update to the GM.
- AFB NPMP review: The Minister for Biosecurity was briefed in early October 2024 regarding the four proposals recieved (including The Management Agency's proposal). MPI is working on a Cabinet paper to seek approval twice: policy approval for NPMP amendments and seeking final approval from Cabinet.
- An amended AFB NPMP review timeline will be shared with The Management Agency, which can then be shared with all beekeepers.

Infringement offences

- As these will appear in separate regulations linking back to relevant clauses of the new AFB NPMP, these have their own policy processes. In order to seek Cabinet approval, a key step is to get the Ministry of Justice (MoJ) comfortable with the proposed infringement

scheme. MoJ requires clarification about which behaviour the infringements offences are aiming to address.

- Rules 11 (Obligation to keep bees in moveable-frame hives) and 15 (apiary registrations) are clear. For rules 27 (Annual Disease Returns) and 32 (Certificate of Inspection), the three sub-clauses aren't as clearcut and will need some thought on how to approach them.
- It may require further consultation led by MPI as a govt policy process and part of introducing new regulations. The consultation will be targeted; it will be made clear to beekeepers that this isn't a re-do of The Management Agency's previous consultation.
- The other proposed amendments will continue as planned and will not be held back due to the infringement offences.
- MPI will have a clearer timeframe in early 2025, to help The Management Agency with its implementation.
- Once the infringement offences come into play, the schemes need to be strong so that The Management Agency is in a strong position in the case of litigation. Ideal timeline:
March/April 2025: approach Cabinet for approval on infringement offences.

Update re [REDACTED]

Mike advised the Compliances & Investigation team are progressing with their investigation. The Compliance team will arrange a catchup with the GM in couple of weeks.

4. Minutes and Actions

4.1 Confirm Minutes of 02 August 2024 Board meeting

August 2024 The Management Agency (virtual) Board Meeting 2 Aug 2024, the minutes were confirmed as presented.

Discussion on results from the 2025/26 levy consultation 23 Oct 2024, the minutes were confirmed as presented.

4.2 Matters arising from minutes

No matters were noted to have arisen from 02 Aug 2024 meeting minutes.

4.3 Action List

Due Date	Action Title	Owner(s)
8 Dec 2023	Send the Liquidator a bill for cost recovery Status: Completed on 2 Aug 2024	Niha Long
15 Dec 2023	s53 Honey Permission Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Mike Harre
12 Apr 2024	Vendor for website project Status: In Progress	Val Graham
1 Jun 2024	Review outdated The Management Agency policies Status: In Progress	Niha Long
18 Jun 2024	Share DECA Compliance checklist with MPI Status: Completed on 2 Aug 2024	Marco Gonzalez

Due Date	Action Title	Owner(s)
28 Jun 2024	Enquire with BGM on new website developers. Status: Completed on 2 Aug 2024	Niha Long
1 Jul 2024	Clarify 2024/25 levy income in advance in a footnote. Status: Completed on 2 Aug 2024	Niha Long
5 Jul 2024	Update interests register to reflect Board members whose terms have expired Status: Completed on 2 Aug 2024	Niha Long
15 Jul 2024	Create a marker for aggressive beekeepers on Salesforce Status: Completed on 2 Aug 2024	Dwayne Hill
19 Jul 2024	Health and Safety risk policy Status: In Progress	Niha Long
9 Aug 2024	2025/26 budget prep for Board's review Status: Not Started	Niha Long
12 Aug 2024	Circulate NPMP review to the sector Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Niha Long
15 Aug 2024	Escalate s53 permission for honey spore testing Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Niha Long
16 Aug 2024	Circulate NPMP review timeline to the sector Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Niha Long
16 Aug 2024	Merge Communications-related tasks, prior to invoice payment Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Niha Long
22 Aug 2024	Health & Safety Wellbeing policy templates Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Val Graham
23 Aug 2024	Afu to look into actioning the minor amendment to NPMP. Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Niha Long
27 Aug 2024	Obtain data on colony numbers of deregistered beekeepers Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Niha Long
29 Aug 2024	Review draft DECA policy. Status: Completed on 15 Nov 2024	Niha Long
27 Sept 2024	Proposal on commercial employee training delivery Status: In Progress	Niha Long
27 Sept 2024	Operations Managers regional surveillance plans to the Board Status: In Progress	Dwayne Hill
24 Oct 2024	Revised AFB strategy Status: In Progress	Niha Long
31 Oct 2024	Standing item: Approach the Board if resourcing is required for implementing workplan and comms. Status: In Progress	Niha Long
4 Nov 2024	Draft messaging for The Management Agency's website re 2025/26 levy rate announcement Status: In Progress	Niha Long
31 Dec 2024	Standing item: Draft advice for AFB best practice and circulate to the Board for approval Status: In Progress	Niha Long

4.4 Interests Register

5. Morning Tea break

5.1 Pause for morning tea.

6. Update from ApiNZ

6.1 Update from the Chair and CE of ApiNZ re the Honey Strategy

Nathan Guy and Karin Cos provided an outline of the Honey Strategy and a timeline for the formation of the new industry body.

7. Management Papers

7.1 General Manager's Report

The Board confirmed the GM's report as read.

The GM touched upon the low level of COI completion rates observed this year, despite an increased effort to disseminate helpful guides to beekeepers, and tailoring reminder messages to beekeepers with live colonies and those without. Apiary Coordinators have reported the absence of the noticeable peak workload they would expect around mid November. A key point is that beekeepers are often contacting a DECA holder for inspections much later in the season than they should. Some parts of the country (e.g. Southland) have less DECA holders.

The Board enquired on the consequences of this on COI default inspections. The GM advised Operations Managers will begin planning their list of COI defaulters between mid Dec and mid Jan within a set criteria (more than 10 colonies or more than 3 apiaries). COI default inspections are tentatively scheduled for Feb - May, to ensure expenses related to inspections are invoices within the current financial year. The GM also touched upon the fact the cost recovery rate for these inspections is not high.

The GM outlined the renewal of the insurance policy for 2025, noting the inclusion of a Cyber cover given the recent experience with the previous phone provider. The Board agreed on the 2025 insurance cover.

7.2 Board approval: Draft blurb of the 2025/26 levy rate announcement

The GM will send the draft paper for the Board's review next week.

7.3 Update #4 on the Management Agency Annual Work Plan

The GM provided a high-level update of the five priorities within the Change Programme and progress of the Annual Work Plan (AWP). Points of note:

- The AWP started with 29 tasks which increased to a total of 92 tasks over the 12 months.
- Over 60% of the AWP was completed, in addition to the Agency's core duties.
- Twenty-nine tasks were being moved to the 2025 AWP (post-Board review) which, in addition to the Change Programme, will prioritise the steps required for the implementation of the new AFB NPMP, implementation of the traffic light system for reducing regional AFB incidence, and increased communications to guide the sector through those changes.

Priority 1 (HiveHub): The GM advised the Board that the Agency will reach out to diagnostic laboratories early next year to revive conversations and offer support for the implementation of sharing of AFB honey test results (post Ministerial approval).

Priority 2 (Commercial beekeepers' training): The Commercial Beekeepers AFB refresher course is nearing completion. The draft course content has been circulated to the Board and feedback is required, before finalising the content. Costs are still under-budget. Val encouraged Model release forms to be signed by actors and staff who were in the videos.

Priority 3 (DECA Review project): The GM briefed the Board on the proposed next steps within the DECA review project; a key point of which includes an industry-wide consultation. The Board raised concerns around potential pushbacks and questioned whether it's the right time,

considering the industry is just starting to build trust in the Agency. The Board agreed (in principle) to proceed with next steps on the condition it is supported by robust comms that explains the rationale and the outcome the Agency is aiming for.

Priority 4 (Comms strategy): The GM provided an update for the website refresh project, flagging that a bulk of the work is required to be done by the team (especially Operations Managers) for reviewing outdated technical content on the current website. The aim is to create short/1-page long PDF guidelines for beekeepers that is easily accessible and understood by beekeepers - prior, during, and after an AFB case is discovered. The website project is still on track to be completed by 31 March 2025.

Priority 5 (Resource Management): The Board noted that the Agency's overall expenditure for the June - Oct 2024 period had reduced 11.4% compared to the same period in 2023. This included a 34% reduction in expenses related to Monitoring & audit (e.g. apiary inspections).

The Chair queried what impact reduced inspections was having on AFB cases and management of AFB hotspots. The GM clarified that in 2023 Operations Managers were deploying AP2s based on parameters set by the previous National Compliance Manager. Since earlier this year, both Operations Managers have been made aware of the monthly budget allocated for operational matters. Likewise, AP2s have been made aware during training days of monthly forecasts and overspends so that AP2 invoices can be managed within budget. Secondly, inspections are more targeted thus reducing the need to go where there is no evidence supporting a need to inspect (unless to verify AFB elimination within a district).

7.4 Finance Report: 2024/25 YTD actuals and forecasts

The Board noted the finance reports.

The GM advised that, as far as practicable, costs related to items under the Change Programme that cannot be delivered this FY will be moved to 2025/26, noting that the budget consulted upon has minimal wiggle-room. As the NPMP will not come into effect until the latter half of 2025/26, funds that were ring-fenced for the implementation of the new NPMP will need to be re-phased out to next year and ring-fenced.

The GM brought the Board's attention to aged debt. She mentioned she does not have adequate clarity about Debtworks processes and will endeavour to get that information, so that the Agency can develop a sound policy around recovery of aged debt for beekeepers' awareness. This will need to be completed in time for the next financial audit.



Liaise with Debtworks and policy development

Liaise with Debtworks to acquire their step-by-step process of debt collection.

Develop a new policy for defining aged debt and setting parameters for writing off old debt.

Due Date: 31 Jan 2025

Owner: Niha Long

8. Lunch

8.1 Lunch

9. Papers for Board discussion/approvals

9.1 Board approval: Draft 2025 Annual work Plan (AWP)



A plan for exotic disease preparedness.

1. Include in 2025 Work plan: Map out gaps and actions that the beekeeping industry needs to take for incursion of exotic pests and diseases.
2. Liaise with the MPI Government Industry Agreement (GIA) team for collaboration on preparedness work.

Due Date: 28 Feb 2025

Owner: Niha Long



Review and provide feedback to GM on 2025 Annual Work Plan

The Board, Mike, and Afu to provide feedback on the 2025 Annual Work Plan

Due Date: 20 Dec 2024

Owner: Niha Long

The GM provided an overview of the draft Annual Work Plan (AWP) for 2025 and mentioned that it captured activities related to:

- the Ministerial approval and implementation of the AFB NPMP
- the infringement offences project
- the Operational Plan review project
- the progress of the five priorities within the NPMP Change Programme.

The GM asked the Board (and MPI) to provide her feedback on any aspects that are missing from the AWP.

9.2 Board review and feedback: Commercial Beekeepers' AFB course

Overall feedback from the Board regarding the Commercial beekeepers' AFB course was positive. Board members felt the content:

- layout looks great, well-presented, and looks professional.
- language is good.
- flowed well and does not feel laborious.
- hits all key messages.
- caters to all levels (even the most experienced will take something away).

The GM advised the Board will be sent links to the draft lessons for a second review; this time for the videos.

9.3 Options for delivery of the Commercial Beekeepers' course

The Board discussed the four options presented in the Options analysis paper for the delivery of the Commercial beekeepers' AFB course.

The Board were unanimously not in favour with Options C (handing over training package to commercial beekeepers) and D (AP1s undertaking training delivery).

Two of the commercial Board members suggested a hybrid approach of Option B (two dedicated trainers in both islands) + C. Their preference was for a team leader to be trained first, who could, in turn, train the other employee beekeepers. Dwayne agreed that approach would work for

smaller operations, with the drawbacks being that the team leader might only absorb and teach parts of the course they want. Another risk would be loss of consistency in teaching methods.

The Chair preferred in-person delivery, as it gives an opportunity to scope feedback for continuous improvement.

Potential charges

Discussions were had around charging beekeepers for the trainer's travel expenses or for the course. Different options were discussed; from per head charges to a tiered-level charges or one flat rate per operations. Incentivising the course is an important consideration, as is ensuring that course costs are not prohibitive or form barriers to enrolling.

The Board asked to keep costs the same as the AFB Recognition course, however, it will need more discussion once the format of training delivery has been confirmed.

Next step:

1. Identify those commercial operations who have employees and who would most benefit from this course.
2. Draft comms material that is clear on the learning objectives.



Next steps for socialising commercial beekeepers' AFB course

1. Identify those commercial operations who have employees and who would most benefit from this course.
2. Draft comms material that is clear on the learning objectives.

Due Date: 24 Jan 2025

Owner: Niha Long

10. Operational Reports

10.1 Operations Managers Report

The Board confirmed the Operations Managers report to be read.

The Chair queried whether the increased numbers of AFB cases found by AP2s meant that beekeepers aren't self-reporting? Dwayne advised that data comes in real time which helps with Ops managers decision-making. The allocation of the inspections are more targeted.

Marco said the Agency is finding less cases of AFB reported that is unexplained, which helps with the triaging of surveillance and accurately allocating AP2 resource where it is most needed. Further, beekeepers no longer feel bad about confessing self-inflicted AFB cases.

Lubomir expressed concerned about the increased number of AFB cases in the West Coast and Nelson/Tasman, compared to previous Board reports. Operations Managers advised it was due to the accurate geocoding of apiaries this year on HiveHub. Overall, all regions were looking good (except Canterbury).

10.2 Operations Managers' Surveillance Plans

Marco's surveillance plan

Marco outlined that his plan is to target apiaries of beekeepers who are self-reporting cases in large numbers for each region; to confirm AFB management and elimination in those apiaries and to assist in their AFB elimination efforts.

The Chair enquired on Marco's focus on beekeepers who have previously reported AFB, but what he didn't see was a sub-regional (targeted) approach. Marco said his objective was to help those who contribute to a large percentage of AFB cases each year. And reducing those numbers would lead to local reduction.

Trent queried why beekeepers with over 1,000 colonies haven't been included in the plan. Marco mentioned the plan was drawn up in a way to use the resources in the best possible way. Dwayne mentioned often those large operations weren't surrounded by other beekeepers. So even if they weren't self-reporting, AFB is not escaping from their operations either and is being relatively self-managed.

Dwayne's surveillance plan

The Chair found the plan logical and liked comparison of the incidence this year vs last year.

The Chair enquired how the Ops Managers would use the information from AFB honey test results into their surveillance plans. Dwayne said they would compare the results from the honey test with case numbers reported by the beekeeping operation. If the numbers don't correlate, then investigations would commence on tracing which apiary the batch of honey had come from. Next steps would involve traceability, auditing DECAs, inspections, and burning of AFB-associated gear.

The important point is to focus on the extremely non-compliant beekeepers first.

11. Afternoon tea

11.1 Pause for afternoon tea

12. The year in review

12.1 Looking back and looking ahead

All present at the meeting reflected on the last 12 months. All Board members were in agreement on the improved levels of comms and engagement with the beekeeping sector, especially improved relationships with New Zealand Beekeeping Inc. The structure/rigour brought to administrative processes was commended upon, as was the improved quality of Board papers over the past year; all of which convey a lot of thought, depth, and ample material to facilitate productive discussions at the Board level. Board members felt the Agency was still on the right direction of travel and hoped ongoing engagements with MPI and the Minister for Biosecurity would lead to decisive actions, wherever needed.

Both Operations Managers commented on:

- a distinct shift in beekeepers' mentality over the last 6 months due to events related to the North Canterbury beekeeper, a noticeable shift to cooperate more with AP2s, and a shift towards increased reporting of AFB cases.
- beekeepers seeking better ways of doing bee husbandry and actively seeking the right advice.
- the Management Agency's visibility, open communication, and perception wanting to work with helping beekeepers.

- beekeepers appreciating the level of engagement from The Management Agency and,
- increased levels of support for The Management Agency from commercial beekeepers .

The Chair reflected that while the [REDACTED] episode helped us outline the steps and provide clarity (through creating and communicating the flowcharts), more clarity was required for communicating the Agency's operational processes, an increased level of transparency to continue reassuring beekeepers, more logic and structure around reducing regional AFB rates.

The GM mirrored everyone's thoughts on the improved relationships with beekeepers and acknowledged that there was more to be done. She also noted that all members in the team are communicating better with each other, working cohesively, on the lookout for solutions, and committed to improving the overall efficiency of the organisation.

12.2 SME update: AFB epidemiology and bee health science

Hayley talked about a new research in Australia using a technique called loop-mediated isothermal amplification (LAMP) assay to detect AFB in managed honeybee colonies. It is a low cost alternative to conventional PCR (a field-based PCR) that is already used in the medical field for detection of salmonella and cholera. It also works for AFB with its sensitivity and specificity for detection being 97% and 98%, respectively. Similar to swab testing, results can be read within 20 minutes on the field.

Hayley also shared MPI Bacteriology lab have been working on accrediting a new test for AFB (a published PCR assay), and registering this alternate one so there are other options for New Zealand labs. This piece of work is related to MPI's World Organisation for Animal Health (WOAH) activities/objectives. Hayley will be able to give an update on the accreditation process at the next Board meeting.

13. Other reports

13.1 Training Report

The Board confirmed the Training report to be read and noted the drop in attendee numbers for the AFB recognition courses.

Various board members reflected that training is often not considered a priority; especially when times are tough, training & education is the first thing to be dropped.

Advertisements, social media, dialogue boxes/snippets, and running banners on the new website were proposed as potential avenues for promoting the courses.

13.2 Health and Safety Report

The Board confirmed the Health & Safety report to be read.

13.3 Complaints Report

The GM provided a verbal update on two complaints received:

1. The first complaint from a Southland beekeeper who did not want inspections done on their hives during spring, which was escalated to the GM. A compromise was reached between the GM and the beekeeper on a date when inspections could commence.
2. The second complaint from a Gisborne beekeeper who wanted their DECA back and had taken all the correct steps on the pathway to having their DECA approved. A matter around the submission date of the 2023 COI form was the point of discussion; further investigation of which revealed the inspecting beekeeper in 2023 had held the

beekeeper's COI form at ransom over an unrelated matter. The DECA was eventually granted.

14. Closing activities

14.1 Other Business and Confirm next Board meeting date



Next Board meeting to be set as a half-day virtual meeting

Next Board meeting to be held on Friday 21 February 2025.

Decision Date: 15 Nov 2024

Outcome: Approved

15. Close Meeting

15.1 Close meeting/closing karakia

Next meeting: No date for the next meeting has been set.

New Actions raised in this meeting

Item	Action Title	Owner(s)
7.4	Liaise with Debtworks and policy development Due Date: 31 Jan 2025	Niha Long
9.1	A plan for exotic disease preparedness. Due Date: 28 Feb 2025	Niha Long
9.1	Review and provide feedback to GM on 2025 Annual Work Plan Due Date: 20 Dec 2024	Niha Long
9.3	Next steps for socialising commercial beekeepers' AFB course Due Date: 24 Jan 2025	Niha Long

Signature:_____

Date:_____

Note: The minutes for 15 November 2024 have been confirmed **out-of-cycle** by all Board members, so that it can be uploaded on The Management Agency's website, prior to the summer holidays.