

# Improve honeybee biosecurity through the training of beekeepers.

## About the program

The responsible management of bee pests and diseases is an important aspect of good beekeeping practice and is a necessity to prevent the spread of bee pests and diseases. This importance was highlighted in July 2015 when the National Biosecurity Code of Practice was introduced for all beekeepers. One problem that many beekeepers face in dealing with bee pests and diseases is a shortage of skills and knowledge in this area.

Following a recommendation from the “Victorian Apicultural Industry Advisory Committee”, Government Minister Jaala Pulford, has recently approved the “Improving honeybee biosecurity through the training of beekeepers” program to address this problem. Through the program up to twenty selected beekeepers from beekeeping clubs in Victoria will be reimbursed the \$425 course fee of a particular on-line bee pests and diseases course. They will need to successfully complete the course by 31<sup>st</sup> December 2016. Successful participants will be required to communicate information about bee pests and diseases to other members of the beekeeping community. The program’s leaders are Barry Cooper and J-P Scheerlinck, both recreational beekeepers from Melbourne.

## About the on-line course

The course is delivered by the New South Wales Department of Agriculture, in conjunction with their registered training organisation, TOCAL college near Maitland in NSW. It is titled “Pests and diseases of honey bees”. Click [here](#) to view an outline of the course.

The course is mapped to the following national units of competency.

- AHCBEK306A Manage pests and disease within a honey bee colony
- AHCBIO302A Identify and report unusual disease or plant pest signs
- AHCWRK301A Collect samples for a rural production or horticulture-monitoring program.

Candidates who successfully complete the course can be credited with these units.

A candidate with basic beekeeping and information processing skills would take approximately 25 hours to complete the course. The fee for the course is \$425. (There is an additional fee of \$25.80 for the cost of the laboratory examination of a larval smear.)

## How to apply

The organizing committee of your beekeeping club has accepted the responsibility of advertising this program to its members and recommending possible candidates to the program leaders. With a total of 20 available sponsorships, each substantial beekeeping club in Victoria will be entitled to at least one reimbursed member, with larger clubs possibly receiving more. A panel of at least three club committee members who are not applicants themselves will receive and rank applications from club members.

If you wish to be considered for this program please return the attached application form to the selection panel chair of your club, \_\_\_\_\_, whose email address is \_\_\_\_\_ by \_\_\_\_\_ with “Application for biosecurity training program” as the subject of the email.

The selection panel will forward their recommendations to the program leaders by Friday 26th February 2016.

The program leaders will inform candidates of the outcome of their application by Friday 4th March 2016.

## **Application for Reimbursement of on-line “Pests and Diseases of Honey Bees” course**

Name of applicant:

Beekeeper Registration Number:

Name of Beekeeping club:

I have submitted an application to another beekeeping club:

Email address:

Phone number (mobile preferred):

Current number of hives:

Years of beekeeping:

Number of years membership in club:

Number of club meetings and events attended in the last 12 months:

**Q1.** Have you previously enrolled in or successfully completed the TOCAL college on-line "Pests and diseases of honey bees" course?

**Q2.** Are you a member of the Victorian Sugar Shake program?

If not, do you agree to becoming a member?

**Q3.** Do you have the skills and resources to complete an on-line course?

**Q4.** Do you agree that your participation in this project is made known?

**Q5.** Do you agree upon your successful completion of the course to deliver a minimum of three biosecurity communications during (or before) the first half of 2017 and a minimum of three more during the second half of 2017?

- At least one of these communications to be a presentation at a beekeeping meeting attended by at least fifteen people
- Other communications to include
  - contributing to organised discussions at a beekeeping meeting.
  - demonstrating appropriate biosecurity techniques at meetings, field days or other events.
  - responding to posts in on-line discussion forums (at least ten substantial responses required).
  - contributing articles for publication in newsletters and web pages.

**Q6.** If required, do you agree to liaise with the Victorian biosecurity officer?

**Q7.** If requested, do you agree to provide feedback, to the program leaders regarding

- How you increased understanding of bee biosecurity amongst beekeepers , and
- How valuable the on-line course was in educating yourself about bee pests and diseases?

**Q8. Explain your motivation for wishing to participate in this program (in 1500 characters or less)**

In doing this you could address:

- Why an understanding of bee pests and diseases by beekeepers is important.
- Why you wish to complete the on-line “Pests and diseases of honey bees” course.
- Your past experience in assisting beekeepers to become better beekeepers.
- Which bee related training sessions or workshops you have completed in the past.

Date of application:

*This part to be completed by the chair of your club's selection panel*

Name of panel chair:

Phone number of panel chair (mobile preferred):

Email address of panel chair:

Ranking preference of above applicant for reimbursement of the \$425 on-line "Pests and Diseases of Honey Bees" course fee upon successful completion of the course:

Comments by panel chair (optional):