

**Summary of the Bee Health Advisory Forum
2nd Meeting, 31st January 2013
Room LG01, Ergon House, Defra, London**

Present:

Helen Crews (Chair)	Food & Environment Research Agency (Fera)
Mike Brown	
Andy Wattam (dialled in)	
Richard Watkins	Department for Environment, Food & Rural Affairs (Defra)
Marie Holmes	
David Aston	British Beekeepers' Association (BBKA)
Margaret Ginman	Bee Farmers' Association (BFA)
Chris Hartfield	National Farmers' Union
Dinah Sweet	Welsh Beekeepers' Association (WBKA)
Mark Tatchell	Science Adviser
Nigel Robins (dialled in)	Beekeeping Representative
Bob Smith	National Diploma in Beekeeping (NDB)
Huw Jones	Welsh Government
Steve Sunderland	Scottish Executive
Pamela Thompson	Defra, Exotics team – Guest speaker
David Williams	Defra, Pesticides & Chemical Policy Team – Guest speaker

Apologies:

Wally Shaw	WBKA
Ken Edwards	Husbandry Adviser
Tim Lovett	BBKA
Amy Byrne	Welsh Government

1. Welcome and Introductions

The Chair welcomed attendees to the 2nd meeting of the Bee Health Advisory Forum. A welcome was extended to Pamela Thompson who was a guest speaker from Defra exotics team and provided the Forum with an update on EU and Animal Health Law. David Williams from Defra Pesticides and Chemical Policy team was also a guest speaker invited to update the Forum on the current situation on neonicotinoids and the wider remit of his department.

2. Bee Health Policy Review – Update on Consultation

The Forum were updated that since the launch on 10th January the number of responses received to date was 12. These were from individual beekeepers and it was expected that association and joint responses would be submitted closer to the 9th March closing date. Views round the table were sought for suggestions on how it could be improved. Responses included:

- Beekeepers in the region had found it difficult to read and would have preferred a list of questions in a template format to respond to.
- The BFA would submit a collated response after their 1st March spring conference meeting, and members were also encouraged to respond individually.
- It was asked where the money was coming from to implement the changes and the reply was it being about cutting the cake in a different way. At present a lot of money was spent on Varroa and little on preparedness for exotics. If exotic pests were to arrive it would be very costly and the policy review team ranked diseases in terms of costs and impact in order to identify where to prioritise funding.
- The WBKA were publicising the consultation at their convention and it had been sent to local secretaries for distribution.
- The questions were easy to find as they were corralled in two areas, but it was noted that the questions were too open which made them difficult to respond to and it was felt they may put some people off.
- It was queried how beekeepers would be empowered in the field. This work was an extension to what was already being done and could be dealt with in a sensible barrier management way with the more skilled and certified beekeepers dealing with infection themselves (protocols yet to be defined) where the aim was to free up inspection time. Additionally the NBU had been awarded funding under the Fera Horizon Scanning and Technology Implementation fund entitled 'Unlocking the potential of lateral flow devices to detect symptomless infection' the project was due to report in May 2013 and this would be fed back to the Forum when complete.
- The consultation was on the Welsh Government website and it reflected their concerns on knowledge transfer in empowering the industry to be competent in recognition of disease.
- It was queried how the feedback would be weighted. Feedback would be compiled with associations representing one response as individuals would be, additionally if there were bulk responses saying the same thing from a single source (i.e. from a campaign) these would be treated as one response also. The review team were looking for evidence as well as opinion.

ACTION 1: Marie Holmes to amend website to guide readers to the two question areas for completion.

3. Update on EU and Animal Health Law

The Chair introduced Pamela Thompson who was the policy lead from Defra Exotics Team. Pamela was invited along to update the Forum on EU and Animal Health Law.

Pamela thanked the Chair for the invitation to come and speak on her work and regarded the meeting as an opportunity for two way information sharing in addition to considering the potential impact on bees and looking at new ways of sustaining and improving UK animal health. Pamela's team aimed to discuss policy as it evolved and this was a piece of work where they would like to work in collaboration with beekeepers and hoped to continue with the dialogue and return to future BHAF meetings.

Please see Annex 1 for full details of the slides presented.

ACTION 2: Richard Watkins to forward policy review tool to Pamela.

The Forum thanked Pamela for her presentation. Pamela offered to provide a questionnaire to lead the subgroup.

ACTION 3: Pamela Thompson to provide Richard Watkins with questionnaire to lead any subgroup working.

ACTION 4: Richard Watkins to consider what could be posted on BeeBase in context to Pamela's work.

4. Update on Current Situation on Neonicotinoids

The Chair welcomed David Williams who was Team Leader in Defra's Pesticides and Chemical Policy Team. David was invited along to update the Forum on the current situation on neonicotinoids.

David thanked the Forum for the invitation. He was based in the Chemical and Emerging Technology team and was the link between Ministers in charge of pesticide policy and HSE as the regulator. A discussion followed regarding the regulatory system, risk assessments, neonicotinoids and research.

ACTION 5: David Williams to issue a statement to the Forum for clarification of the Efsa report.

ACTION 6: Richard Watkins to advise the Forum when data becomes available from the discussed projects and ACP.

ACTION 7: Richard Watkins and David Williams to draft a line for posting on BeeBase for correcting common misconceptions.

The Chair thanked David for his valued contribution to the meeting. The Forum found it very useful to have a shared understanding of the detail.

ACTION 8: David Williams to feedback developments in Europe to the Forum.

5. Minutes of 1st BHAF Meeting and Highlight report (BHAF/1)

As the minutes from the previous meeting weren't included in the meeting papers it was requested if any comments on the minutes from the 1st BHAF meeting could be forwarded to Marie Holmes.

ACTION 9: All - Comments to Marie Holmes by 8th February for sign off and posting on BeeBase.

Highlight report – there was a suggestion to refresh the report by revision of the risk register and perhaps to rank the top 3 risks only and mark the whole document as restricted.

ACTION 10: Helen Crews, Richard Watkins and Marie Holmes to sanity check and refresh the highlight report ahead of the next meeting putting risks in order, move any completed risks to a completed list and compartmentalise into the differing subject areas as a first pass before sending to the Forum for their perspective.

6. Proposed BHAF Agenda Items for 2013 (BHAF/2)

The Forum were updated with progress the bee health policy team had made on gathering together potential topics for the year. Paper BHAF/2 outlined the potential topics and when they would occur during the year. Sector specific issues could meet outside of the Forum and the timetable was flexible to react to current issues. It was asked if this was a good idea and whether the timetable could be agreed. There were no objections and all agreed it was a sensible way forward to have two major items per meeting. However, a suggestion was made for an additional meeting on the apiculture programme during February.

ACTION 11: Marie to look for a suitable date during February for the intermediate apiculture meeting.

It was also agreed to set the dates for the whole year and to include one date in Cardiff.

ACTION 12: Marie to set dates (via doodlepoll) for the year.

7. AOB

The BFA's apprenticeship sponsorship event in London went well and a meeting was set up with the skills council and City & Guilds in addition to number of other interested parties. Thanks were expressed to Fera for the funding provided to launch the apprenticeship scheme and an expression of interest was indicated for further funding for initial support of the apprenticeship scheme.

A query was raised whether it would be useful to revisit the registration question and our understanding of beekeepers on BBKA database and BeeBase. The NBU carried out an analysis of this in September 2011 with the aim to better understand the number of registered beekeepers across England and Wales. High level summary of the results are listed below:

- Despite a huge effort by the Inspectorate, many county associations do not share data (45/64), and some have not responded to requests from Bee Inspectors to address data sharing policy (17/64).
- The regional percentage of BBKA members registered on BeeBase varies between 67% and 98.5%.
- This exercise has resulted in an estimated additional 2291 beekeepers becoming registered on BeeBase.
- Assuming a scheme of complete data sharing by the BBKA was in place, BeeBase would receive 1965 new registered beekeepers annually.

- The large number of BBKA members that remain unknown to the NBU seriously compromises the ability of the NBU to control notifiable disease and to contain any future incursion of an exotic pest.

ACTION 13: Helen Crews, Mike Brown, David Aston and Dinah Sweet to meet and update the Forum with anonymous results at March meeting

Healthy Bees Project Team
Defra
6 February 2013

Table of actions

Action Number	Action	Person(s) responsible
1	Amend website to guide readers to the two question areas for completion. Comment: Complete. Kim Chadwick has added a response form (in word and PDF) to the consultation documents which guides readers to the areas in the document where the questions are.	Marie Holmes
2	Forward policy review tool to Pamela.	Richard Watkins
3	Provide Richard Watkins with questionnaire to lead any subgroup working.	Pamela Thompson
4	Consider what could be posted on BeeBase in context to Pamela's work.	Richard Watkins
5	Issue a statement to the Forum for clarification of the Efsa report.	David Williams
6	Advise the Forum when data becomes available from the three listed projects and ACP.	Richard Watkins
7	Draft a line for posting on BeeBase for correcting common misconceptions.	Richard Watkins and David Williams
8	Feedback developments in Europe to the Forum.	David Williams
9	Comments on 1 st meeting notes to Marie Holmes by 8 th February for sign off and posting on BeeBase.	All
10	Sanity check and refresh the highlight report ahead of the next meeting putting risks in order, move any completed risks to a completed list and compartmentalise into the differing subject areas as a first pass before sending to the Forum for their perspective.	Helen Crews, Richard Watkins and Marie Holmes
11	Look for a suitable date during February for the intermediate apiculture meeting.	Marie Holmes
12	Set BHAF dates (via doodlepoll) for the year.	Marie Holmes
13	Meet and update the Forum with anonymous results at March meeting of beekeepers on BeBase and BBKA databases.	Helen Crews, Mike Brown, David Aston and Dinah Sweet




EU Animal Health Law

Bee Health Advisory Forum
31 January 2013

EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

Objectives of session

information sharing



considering potential impacts on bee keeping and bee health

new ways of sustaining and improving UK animal health - opportunities for industry-government working

EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

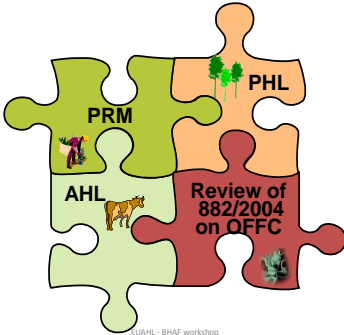
Aim of the Animal Health Law

- to implement the vision and commitments in the EU Animal Health Strategy (2007-2013)
- to set basic principles for all aspects of animal health including responsibilities, disease notification and control measures, surveillance, bio-security, vaccination, movement (of animals and products) and trade, ensuring conditions for early disease detection and including provision of services in Member States
- to set a legal basis for a common EU animal health policy and a **single, simplified, transparent, flexible and clear regulatory framework** for animal health



EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

The Context



EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

Where are things up to?

- 2nd round of informal Commission Working Groups completed in March 2012
- internal consultation and clearance within the Commission, development and translation of final drafts continues
- formal Commission proposal to Council expected spring/summer 2013 alongside the rest of the OFFC package
- enactment 2014/15 with minimum three year transition?



EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

What's the UK looking for?

- greater regulatory simplicity
- strong focus on outcomes, not process
- flexibility to manage disease threats appropriately
- risk, evidence and science based approach
- opportunities for earned recognition



EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

What will the Animal Health Law cover?

- **Part I** General rules
- **Part II** Surveillance and disease freedom
- **Part III** Disease prevention, control and eradication
- **Part IV** Requirements concerning establishments, identification and registration of animals and movements
- **Part V** Introduction and Export
- **Part VI** Transitional measures and final provisions

EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

A government – industry approach

- all **UK Ministers** want to work closely with industry to ensure proposals and practical implications are considered before formal negotiations commence
- **UK Core Group** of industry representatives from each sector – a starting point
- in England, the **AHWBE** have a keen interest in development of proposals and industry engagement as do industry groups in Scotland, Wales and Northern Ireland

EU/AHL - BHAf workshop

How are we engaging?

Parliamentary Committees



Sector & Regional Workshops



Industry publications



Government websites and 'tweets'

Sector events

EUAHL - BHAF workshop

Key questions

What do we like about current arrangements which we want to keep/what would we want to change?

Where are the opportunities to do things differently and to promote earned recognition?

What are the 'red lines' i.e. things we wouldn't want to see?

What might the potential costs and benefits to industry be?

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General Principles/Responsibilities

General Responsibilities
Risk management – scientific/evidence based
International co-operation – OIE, third countries etc
Role of owner, veterinarian, Competent Authority and EU in maintaining and protecting animal health and bio-security

Disease prioritisation and categorisation
Disease control measures based on category of disease and accounting for:
species, spread, severity, zoonotic character, transmission routes, impact on economy, human health, society & environment, feasibility and impact of control measures

Things to think about:
guidance or regulation? would codes of practices work?
how would malpractice be addressed?
how do bee keepers demonstrate knowledge and competence?



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Surveillance and disease freedom

Surveillance, notification and eradication
Risk based surveillance - active, passive and reporting depending on category of disease & epidemiology
Notification of abnormalities, decreased production or disease signs to Competent Authority
Eradication programmes – design and delivery



Disease freedom
National/regional - country/disease free compartments
Effective proven reporting (length of active surveillance)

Things to think about:
Industry based surveillance based schemes?
Notification through private veterinarian or direct to Competent Authority?
Benefits/risks in operating disease free compartments?

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Disease Prevention, Control and Eradication

Preparedness
Contingency planning – national, regional, local
Simulation exercises
EU level - pool of veterinary experts to assist other MS/3rd countries

Emergency measures
Facilitating swift action/notification of emerging disease/hazard/risk
Ensuring consistency across EU (avoiding market distortions)

Things to think about:
Value of business based contingency plans
Reliance on EU vaccine banks - private sector options?
Impact and effectiveness of emergency & control measures
Impact of control measures on bee keeping

Control measures
Control Zone, Protection Zone, Surveillance Zone & associated activities

Vaccination
Considerations for use: - disease characteristics/distribution, vaccine availability, diagnostics for detecting infection in vaccinated animals, economic impact, other control options

Vaccine and diagnostic banks
EU and/or national level

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Establishments, identification and registration of animals and movements

Registration, approval, record keeping and registers
Registered establishments, transporters – derogations where insignificant risk
Approvals for – assembly operations, germinal product centres/teams
Record keeping – animals, movements, disease problems, bio-security measures

Traceability
Individual identification – database held by issuing body
Movements accompanied by ID document
Germinal products – traceable to donor/team/centre

Movements
Compliance with registration, approval, identification & record keeping requirements
Conditions for & notification of movement between MS
Bio-security during transport Certification requirements
Products of animal origin/germinal products
Wild animals



Things to think about:
Derogations – what does 'insignificant risk' look like?
Impact on dealers, markets, shows, recreational moves?
Scope for self-certification/electronic reporting?
Anything here which could aid bee health?

Import and Export

3rd Country Imports
Principles for introduction of animals & products
OIE monitoring and reporting on differing level of risks
Defined criteria around registration & approval of establishments, veterinary certification, reporting in country of origin etc



Things to think about:
Risks and opportunities around trade?

Export
Compliance with relevant rules
Bilateral agreement provisions
Risks and opportunities

Requirements for the introduction into the Union from third countries and territories of other commodities
Germinal products
Pathogens
Equipment

EUAHL - BHAF workshop

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