

## **Question and answer session - Honeybee industry briefing, Newcastle**

**Wednesday 29 June, 2022**

Lloyd Kingham:

Just to reinforce some of the things that Satendra was saying, which precludes the closing messages and my appeal to you for help, any infested premises, the centre of them red circles, we're killing the bees now using petrol in the top of the box on a tea towel. Roughly the way that you've always done it. What we're going to be doing in the week ahead to kill everything within the red zones is using a chemical called Fipronil, which is similar to Ant Rid that you might've seen people use on their kitchen bench when it gets invaded by ants. Now this is important, because it's the Fipronil which is going to kill the feral bees as well. So I know that people want to go out there and start destroying hives now, but just be aware that we need a good number of hives out there to be poisoned with Fipronil so when the feral bees raid them hives, it's going to knock them out as well. If you want to know any more about that then I'm happy to hang around for awhile.

Lloyd Kingham:

But this is how we need your help. Thank you, once again, for being here tonight. And I've been really impressed over the last week just how much help you've given us in trying to work out where the edge of this thing is. So one of the questions that was asked of me tonight was if I'm not allowed to tamper with my hives, and the lids blow off and is exposed to this cold change coming across with a couple of inches of rain, what am I supposed to do? If there's anything you need to do, in any of your hives, you're not allowed to tamper with them, you're not allowed to move them. But if you need to get near them, take a sample while you're there. Tell me where the edge is.

Lloyd Kingham:

So what we want you to do is continue to report the locations of hives just by letting us know through the Exotic Plant Pest hotline, or Hive Location, or just ring in that hotline. And that's ... we're going to want to know where as many hives are as possible, because once we use this Fipronil thing, the hives'll be rendered useless. And so, any ideas you've got about, have you thought about this, have you thought about that, it's already pre-agreed at Satendra's level, at the national level. This is the way we're going to do it. So what we've got to do is count every

hive out of them red zones and put it underground, or burn it. That's why we want to know where they all are.

Lloyd Kingham:

So, again, you can notify us by the Exotic Plant Pest hotline, which is what you've all got; by email to Hive Locations; or, report a biosecurity concern, which is another website. Again, like Jamie said, please visit the New South Wales DPI website for further updates. Don't move your hives, your bees, or any of the material. Because that's what this thing is going to hitchhike on.

Lloyd Kingham:

If you feel comfortable doing a sugar shake or an alcohol wash, or any brood uncapping, bear with me. We've got some instruction here tonight. Grab a handout, do the job, let us know what the result is. Help me find the edge. But there's a few things that I really want you to think about. Soon as you uncap a hive, you've got to think that the mite is going to be on you. So I've already spoken to a few of you, they're sick of hearing it from me, but if you're in the red zone, particularly close to the centre, we're pretty confident you're going to find one. So if you want a priority, find me the edge. If you are in the middle of the red zone and you find one, make sure you got a spare change of clothes with you. And if you detect mites in your hive, you'll need to basically take off all your clothing, put it in a bag, stick it in the freezer for 24 hours to make sure that you're not pushing that circle further out. So that's a don't complain, that's a must. Or you can leave it on site for a week, because we know the Varroa mite doesn't live for a period of time once it's off the bee.

Lloyd Kingham:

If you do catch any Varroa mites, and I've seen another example tonight where someone's done a test inside a red circle, they've shown me a photo here tonight. So you will find it. We are going to find more of these things. Put it in a Ziploc bag, report it to us via the 1-800 hotline. We're interested in collecting them samples so we can do some molecular and just confirm that it is what you fear it is. And then like Jamie said, let us send it off to the lab. Now you mightn't hear from us for a number of days, because what we're trying to do is find the edge. But if you're in the red zone, then sooner or later the bees are going to be dead.

Lloyd Kingham:

So I guess the appeal tonight is we're running pretty hard at the moment. The caseload is pretty high. Let us know the results, and if you don't hear back from us in 48 hours, it's because Lloyd's having a nap. It's not because we don't care. Or, we're running hard to do a trace forward off another detection. Can you change that last slide please? Thank you.

Lloyd Kingham:

I guess finally, this is having a big impact on us all. Me, Jamie, Lee, the industry liaison officers, and I know it's been having an impact on some of you people, particularly those who it's just starting to dawn on you how much work we're going to be doing in them red zones. So, just be aware. We've got a number of services that are here tonight. They're standing over there by the door. Reuel, thank you, he's waving his hand around. Do it again? Thank you. If you're concerned about you, or you're concerned about your mate, or someone else in your family, don't be ashamed to use these contacts. I was a drought support worker for 10 years. These people do good work. Make sure you use them.

Lloyd Kingham:

And again, to finish off with, there'll be some handouts here tonight for where to find out further information, and that's [dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa](http://dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa), and that website we'll keep updated with them outbreaks as well. Make sure you register your hive, and send us your sample results, and keep track of those Facebook messages from us for any further emergency messages.

Lloyd Kingham:

And I guess finally, and once again, thank you for coming tonight. This is a thing we're in together. We're pretty confident at the moment we're starting to get a handle on where this thing us up to, but we absolutely need your help over the next few weeks to get confidence on that edge. Once we work out where the edge is, that's when we start killing things. But every IP that we find up until that point in time, we'll just kill them using petrol on site.

Lloyd Kingham:

So, before I finish proceedings, myself, couple of the industry liaison officers, and at least a couple of these characters, we're going to be around for the next couple of hours I feel, so we're not going to go. If you go to the bathroom, or go downstairs and get a feed or get a drink, we look forward to talking to you to take you through your concerns. Thank you very much, we'll talk to you soon.

Speaker 2:

I wanted to ask a question.

Lloyd Kingham:

Well there was ... I'm willing to take some questions now, but if it's beyond the sort of stuff we've spoken about, we can't talk much about it. But let's have a go at some questions then. Do you want a microphone?

Speaker 2:

I've got a pretty strong voice. What sort of compo are you talking about for the hive if you're in the red zone

Lloyd Kingham:

I think there's a figure. I'm not sure there's one for recreational yet, but for commercial Satendra?

Satendra:

Thanks. Look, in terms of the agreed framework for honoring investment through the deed, we already have that. And in terms of recreational bees, we're working with it. And as I said, I have had discussions with my deputy director general, my director general and the Minister, to ensure that nobody's worse off. We've done lots of eradications in Australia, Citrus canker in Northern Territory and Western Australia, just [inaudible 00:10:03]. So we've done lots of responses, and many a time there are members of the deed who have a formal mechanism of what you call honor investment as a kind of compensation. But that we have a number of parties who are not party to the deed, and really it's not about destroying people's lives. So we're going to make sure that we are. I can't give you a dollar value because I'm not the judge for it. It's a very open, transparent manner where it's not the government deciding, it's the [inaudible 00:10:38] industry who are part of the working group that will decide what a fair compensation is.

Lloyd Kingham:

Thanks, Satendra. [inaudible 00:10:47], can you turn on the other mic as well, please? Thank you. Yup, you got another one? Yup, you're next.

Question from audience:

Good day. Thanks guys for that. (Name removed for privacy). So I'll probably answer your question before I ask it, and the answer will be, that's not my department. So, just a bit of background knowledge, last 10 years, beekeepers have been through fire, flood, drought, beetle incursions. Now they've just had a good season, they're struggling to sell honey. They're financially struggling, and on top of that they've got inflation, fuel prices. So, the big question in my mind is, the 300,000 hives going almonds in the next two weeks. Right?

Question from audience:

So, you're talking about Beyond Blue, Lifeline. Beekeepers are on their knees. Logically, you need to put 150 kilometer radius around Newcastle, let the state go. So beekeepers have to prepare their hives, they have to-

PART 1 OF 4 ENDS [00:12:04]

Question from audience:

to get them to almonds. And if you guys don't open up this week, there's a chain of responsibility and there's going to be beekeepers crashing trucks trying to get bees to almonds to survive. So this mite, if it gets away, will knock out 50% of the beekeepers. If you don't open up the state, logically, and clearly, then you're going to wipe them out before it's even started.

Lloyd Kingham:

Thank you. I do understand. I know that there's a lot of questions around that. This was a question that got asked me when I walked in or I was over by the door. This is a response plan. What you've heard tonight, that's what's going to roll out. There is communications in the state through September about what we do about the almond pollination, but all you need to hear from me is this is what we're going to be doing for the next week. I'm not sure what we're doing in a month's time. .

Speaker 4:

Thank you. Thank for the opportunity. Just for the context of this question, can I ask is the primary vector for this parasite the live honeybee?

Satendra:

According to the literature, yes. It's of the honeybee. There is a reference made in PNG where they have seen on Asian honeybee, but we don't have Asian honeybee. And honest, I can't claim to be-

Speaker 4:

So the vector for this creature is the live honeybee. We have to have live honeybees involved to have it either survive or move. Is that fair? Are we agreed?

Lloyd Kingham:

That's correct.

Speaker 4:

Okay. Further to that, how long does the varroa mite last in empty equipment in the absence of live bees? Okay. No, I just want to strike a groundwork. It's just important that we lay this thing out carefully.

Lloyd Kingham:

Yep, so the-

Speaker 4:

Okay? Because, yeah, it's going somewhere.

Lloyd Kingham:

Yeah, I understand that.

Speaker 4:

Okay.

Lloyd Kingham:

Yeah. The varroa dies after a certain period of time off a honeybee. Yes.

Speaker 4:

Yep, in the absence of honeybees. Okay, so within the red zone, and I'm talking deeply within the red zone, within that red zone, I'm wondering who is it that we are calling on for the technical advice in the relation to the destruction of the live honeybees?

Lloyd Kingham:

Yeah, okay. Right. So there is an international experience in responding to varroa, most recently in New Zealand. There is an existing APVMA permit that talks about how the chemical works, and it's in the response plan. So the response plan has already hardwired into it the experience from around the planet and what we're going to pull the trigger on in the next week.

Speaker 4:

Yep. I have-

Satendra:

If I just add that, apart from the previous learnings that has gone in the response plan, Liz Frost, who is our expert, is near, and she's flying back. We have spoken to Dennis Anderson, some of you may know who was our expert, retired. He's overseas. We have spoken to him, and we are also making arrangements for a expert from New Zealand to fly in, hoping to get here as soon as possible.

Speaker 4:

There are multiple challenges in the relation to plastic and polystyrene material for the environment in relation to EPA and so forth. I won't dig too deeply on that, but I will suggest to you most strongly, those of you who are trying to contain this outbreak, there is a way to reduce the vector. There is a way to kill the bees that does not require the total destruction in terms of burning of the equipment. You're in a very vulnerable environment. It is the supply of water to the largest population here in Australia. I would suggest to you very, very strongly that you need to consider immediately another way to reduce the vector or destroy the vector that doesn't require the destruction of equipment. It easily could be fumigate in an airtight space. So thank you for your time.

Lloyd Kingham:

I understand. Thank you. And a few people raised that with me at the door. The response plan is that is how we've laid it out. That's what's already been nationally agreed. We were

developing a disposal plan over the last couple of days in conjunction with the RFS and the Environmental Protection Authority. They're the sort of cooperating agencies that Lee gets in the room to work with us. So we are aware of the problems in front of us. But again, the ideas that you've got, we can spend a lot of time talking about them tonight, but that's what we're going to do. That's already pre-agreed. So we're interested in your thoughts, but again, we're trying to be honest here, that's what we're going to roll out.

Speaker 5:

Sorry, can I just add to that, if you're not going to listen to the industry, if you're not going to take the advice of the ILOs, why are they standing in the response room? Why are they even here if you're not going to listen to the ILOs?

Lloyd Kingham:

We're definitely listening to the ILOs and trying to work out how to make it work effectively. But again, the response plan is already pre-agreed by the national industry and all the jurisdictions, so I'm here tonight telling you fair dinkum. We've already thought about how we might be able to save some frames here and there before we go with this thing, but this is what we're going with, and it's going to hurt. Yes, sir.

Speaker 6:

Just two simple questions. Firstly, say, just to clarify, all beehives within the red zone will be euthanized?

Lloyd Kingham:

That's correct.

Speaker 6:

Yep. Secondly, how long before we can have bees back on our properties after having euthanized?

Lloyd Kingham:

There is a period of time we'll be here. Satendra, do you know the answer for that? How long before we can get back to it?

Satendra:

It's complex in a sense that, as I pointed earlier, there is a very narrow window of whether winning or losing. If we are not able to contain and eradicate, the game will be over very quickly. New South Wales will have no border restrictions within. All the other jurisdictions have already told us that there will be no bees or any pathway that may move Varroa mite moving off New South Wales. This is why I'm emphasizing that let's go hard. And look, in regards to the gentleman here, I'm sorry I didn't get your name, in regards to if you have some clever ideas we will. But with those just don't want to delay our tactics here in the next two weeks.

Satendra:

Otherwise, we'll be living with varroa as many countries are. And you guys know better than a lot of people how varroa can not only impact honey production, but pollination and other affected industries as well. So one thing at a time. If we are able to eradicate it, we will have zones, and zones are being created as we go. And if we can't, as I said, it will very quickly... I mean, I'm already working with a thought that if we contain it here, but bees fly everywhere, so we can't contain it. So there's a lot of thinking that is going around at the moment.

Lloyd Kingham:

We might be able to get an answer for you on how long we're in this for. But after we do all of our actions, we're at least going to be here for three years monitoring to ensure we've got proof of freedom, and that's our international requirement. So we are here for a good time. I'm not sure about when you can repopulate, I'm sorry, at the moment. Yes, sir.

Guest:

Evening. My name is (name removed for privacy). I'm in the red zone two kilometers from the port in Mayfield. Picked up one of the mites in an inspection on Sunday, 1:00. Jumped on the phone, reported it through to the authorities.

Lloyd Kingham:

Thank you.

Speaker:

I'm sure I'm probably one of the site cases there. I do appreciate you guys would be absolutely flat off of your feet. There's no doubt about that. And everyone in this room and in the industry is

all here to work together, so there's no point pointing fingers and blaming anyone. I'm not here to do that. Communication has been very poor. I'm still chasing updates. Besides the automated emails that I continue to get every day, I'm still waiting on my hive to be eradicated. I've got two hives. I made the call myself on Sunday night to lock it down to stop them from further spreading. I'm only a hobby beekeeper, not even 12 months experience. I just thought it was the right thing to do without any instructions.

Speaker:

Yeah, it's quite disturbing having them in your yard there with no answers. And we don't have the facility to burn them on site. They're both on two roof's out of the way. We've got vegetables that we grow in our backyard, organically, not using any chemicals as well. I've got three kids, I've got chickens, and we are very close to the proximities of other homes. So can you provide a timeline on when I expect to hear from the DPI on when... I did hear you say that the eradication inside the 10 kilometre zone is starting to take place. That's going to eventually happen with all. But my case is different. I actually have the mite. Is mine a priority? Yeah, I want to know a timeline of when to expect it to happen.

Lloyd Kingham:

Yeah, sure. Thank you, Chris. Yeah. My apologies. We thank you. Your report was welcome. It wasn't a surprise given where it was. It is a priority. We just haven't got there yet. And to all of you, this is going to happen. We are going to make mistakes. If you are concerned, let us know. We'll do our best to get around there. I guess the fair dinkum answer to your question is you've not as been high priority as some of the other tasks that we've been doing.

Lloyd Kingham:

But if you think about what I asked or what I said earlier, having a live hive, working hard is going to be crucial to what we do in the red zones over the next few weeks. If you have peculiar, peculiar is not the right word, particular circumstances where you would just want to kill them out and get rid of it, our disposal program includes at the moment doing a milk run. Once we do the kill through the city of Newcastle and disposing of every hive, we'll come and get it. But yeah, I'll talk to you. We'll see if we can't look after you tomorrow or the next. Thank you, (name removed). Where are we? Yep.

Guest 1:

Hi, my name is (name removed). I'm a commercial beekeeper just on the edge. I'm not in any of the zones, but I've got 12,000 acres of forestry lease on the edge there. My concern is fipronil baiting. You're putting fipronil into the system. You've said that the reliance on fipronil is that not only that the hive that consumes the bait is killed, but then subsequent hives that rob out those hives are killed.

Lloyd Kingham:

Lloyd Kingham

Guest 1:

Right? We were talking about reoccupying space, reoccupying areas once the crisis is over. That was talked about for a number of potentially years. At what point do you stop fipronil baiting? Is this...

PART 2 OF 4 ENDS [00:24:04]

Guest 1:

Is this a continual process where you're going to bait-

Lloyd Kingham:

Oh, I see.

Guest 1:

... For three years? And as an aside, just from a perspective of not wanting to harm beyond what we have to, is there a basis on which you're trying to mitigate the effects of fipronil on non-target species? So are you putting fipronil in open IBCs, or are we putting fipronil under queen excluders so that only... You know, what are we looking at here with fipronil? If you bait my area, when can I go back? This is a big deal, because it's my livelihood. It's not a, hey, it is what it is. This is the plan, it's great. I need to eat, you know?

Lloyd Kingham:

Yep. No, I do understand.

Guest 1:

So we need some form of timeline on fipronil, specifically.

Lloyd Kingham:

Sure. So it's pre agreed, the use of the chemical, it's in the response plan. There is an APVMA permit that details just how we will use it. I don't remember the details and I don't have them with me, but the campaign is very short. So we free feed and burn a bit of wax and honey to attract the bees for a period of time, then we spike it with the fipronil. The design of the trap is to keep... And I'm pretty sure it's toxic to insects, but we're working up the design now based on experience elsewhere of restrictive access, so that we're targeting the European honey bee. We'll probably knock off a few European wasps as well, but we're hoping that the design will limit butterflies and things like that getting in there.

Lloyd Kingham:

We may be up here again in a week's time saying, "We need your help to work out just how effective this fipronil is. Tell us about your mortalities," because it does degrade over time anyway as a chemical, and over distance as it's passed from hive to hive. If it doesn't work the first time, it's indicated we'll probably try it again, and bearing in mind that it's going to rain heavy over the next four or five days. If we did it tonight, the feeling is we probably wouldn't get a good uptake.

Lloyd Kingham:

But it's not going to last for months. It's going to be a pretty solid hit that'll have a mortality event, and then we've got to pick up the mess to make sure that it's not in the environment. When I say that we're going to be here for three years doing surveillance that's after we eradicate everything, then we're just going to be getting you to use a lot of thymol traps and sticky mats, just to try and work out if that treatment has been effective.

Lloyd Kingham:

So I don't have the timeframe, but that's the general feel. Anywhere within them red dots, we're going to kill all of the target species in the next... Well, before August, definitely, before things start moving again. How often we repeat it is probably going to be limited to the next three months. What that impacts you in the future, I can't tell you at the moment. Thank you..

Speaker 7:

Hi, thanks for the briefing. My priority is nowhere near as high as many of the people in the room, but I'm just curious, if the mite requires a live bee to survive, and if it doesn't have a live

bee, if I understood correctly earlier, for up to a week, it's likely to die. If I have a flow hive and am able to extract my honey from the hive, and it's a sealed tube from flow to my jars, is there any issue with me extracting the honey that is left in my hives using the flow system and not disturbing the hives in doing that?

Lloyd Kingham:

Well, it's prohibited at the moment.

Speaker 7:

So I understand it's prohibited, but what I'm trying to understand is if there is a reason for flow hives in that context to be prohibited?

Lloyd Kingham:

You know, to be honest... And I appreciate the question. I understand that the flow hive is a low-tamper thing. The prohibition is to stop everything generally, because I don't and Jamie doesn't and Satendra doesn't have the resources to look at every individual circumstance. So I'm sorry, you may have an argument for why that would occur, but again, referring to the gentleman's question here earlier on, for us to do this well, which is the expectation of the industry, everything in the red zone dies, and what you're suggesting is prohibited

Guest 2:

Yeah, (name removed) here. Just wanted to understand, at the moment you're trying to identify where it is and work hard on that, I understand, but what's the trigger point where we declare this is endemic? We can't control it. We can't just continue now to put red zones all over the state. We must have a predetermined measure. They said this has been planned for some time, so what is it? What is the actual point we declare we can't beat this and we move to managing it instead of eradicating it?

Satendra:

Thank you. It's a really good question, and we have been looking at this, and as Lloyd said earlier, so far, it's very clear that the detections we have here is very related. It's either related to a site or the nearness to where we found it. Should we find mites elsewhere, and the technology was talked about, we can genetically very quickly identify that there are two populations here... So hypothetically, and I've been caught sometimes talking hypothetically, but if we do detect

mites in almonds say in a couple of weeks, and it's a totally different population, the technical feasibility of eradication.

Satendra:

So the consultative committee, I didn't want to go into the detail, but just to answer your question, when the committee meets, this is industry and government, we go through a process of, is it a pest? We know it's a pest. Is it containable and eradicable? We have to really go through the process to answer that question. Are we still in the game or not? And I'm telling you, with varroa and bees, if it spreads very quickly, the game's over.

Satendra:

And that's why I really emphasize the evidence collected so far is very clear that we've got a nucleus population here. If it's different, the game's over. I've sort of talked to people in New Zealand as well, and talking to our entomologists across the country, everybody's emphasizing go quick, go hard. If you don't do that, you might as well don't do anything, just live with it.

Guest 2:

So yeah, just on that, to clarify, I didn't get a real answer there. At what point, are we saying 100 kilometres, 200 kilometres, half of the state, at what point do you admit you can't control it? You said this has been declared now for years, we've had a plan. What is the plan? Give me a number. What is it?

Satendra:

You're holding me to a number? Look, so-

Guest 2:

You said the plan has been around for years. What is the plan?

Satendra:

The plan is that there's a consultative committee across Australia, technical experts looking and deciding based on their evidence. And what you've just said, if it's detected miles away, almost the game's over. That's what I'm saying.

Guest 2:

So how far are we looking right now? How far are we looking?

Lloyd Kingham:

So I guess an answer to your question, we can't give you a magic number because it's not pre agreed, but what happens when these characters get together at the nation is that they make that decision. So we're here tonight saying, "Find me where the edge is." We do all the trace premises, all the trace forwards, and then we give the information to these poor fellas to actually make that final determination.

Lloyd Kingham:

What I'm here to say tonight is it looks like we've got it early. Help me find the edge. If we start finding it outside of the zone, that's where this poor fella's got to make the decision with his equivalent nationally, based on the international experience. You're not going to get a number. You're not going to get a distance, but it's going to make me tremble if we start finding more IPs outside this area, which I guess getting back to your earlier question is why we're shutting down everything until we work out where this thing has got to. But that decision will be made if it does get away on us. Yep, I'm sorry?

Guest 3:

Okay, yes. (name removed).

Guest 3:

These mites, they've only been found a week ago, but on the number of mites that are being found, the count in the hives and the number of hives that contain mites, these mites have been here for more than one year. So during that time, they've had a possibility of spreading far further, so you need to look a lot further than where you're looking now so we can determine where this point is.

Guest 3:

Also, no country in the world has been able to eradicate mites once they entered that country. New Zealand got mites in the year 2000 in the North Island. They could not contain them to the North Island and they're now in the South Island. And the fact that they've been here for that long, they're in our feral population, the distance so far that you found them, from this centre

here up to Buladelah, it is impossible to eradicate all the feral colonies in that area. And you only have to miss out on one mite.

Lloyd Kingham:

Agree. Bailey, can you put us back to that zones slide, please? Yeah, that's a good point. How long has it been here? We don't know. I'm not sure about the year figure. We've got epidemiologists working on it now.

Guest 3:

[inaudible 00:35:29].

Lloyd Kingham:

Well, there's a few things going on. Let me finish your answer and then I'll take yours next, sir. The how far are we checking, the way I've been explaining it within the control centre is there's an environmental spread that we're trying to check, and that's where I'm asking for your help. Show me where the edge is here in this locality. Now, once we work out where the edge is, we can calculate back to day zero and the index case. Up until we get that work, we can make-

PART 3 OF 4 ENDS [00:36:04]

Lloyd Kingham:

estimates about how long it's been here, but we don't know, so if you look at them red zones, that's me trying to find that bleed-out edge. I think the other thing you're getting at is what if it has gone elsewhere? Every infested premises, apart from (name removed) here, who's only got a couple of hives, we are compelling them to provide us with the information of where their hives have gone over a period of time, and we are going and visiting all of them sites now. That's why you're hearing about some of these out of region areas.

Lloyd Kingham:

Now, again, from what Satendra said earlier, if we go in there and we find nothing, we've got a chance of eradicating it. If we go there and find a heap of it, the decision is already made for us, but I will correct you. Australia is the only country on the planet that's eradicated this pest in the recent period, and we've done it for varroa jacobsoni as well.

Speaker 8:

[inaudible 00:37:04] didn't actually come in.

Lloyd Kingham:

No, I understand.

Speaker 8:

Actually, [inaudible 00:37:12].

Lloyd Kingham:

But this is the plan at the moment. Help me find the edge. So (name removed), I said, this gentleman here could, yeah. Thank you.

Speaker 9:

I guess I'll be very close to one of the red zones and I don't feel confident that it hasn't spread further because from overseas experience, the mite tends to spread between six to eight Ks a year, and we've got a huge distance between the Newcastle and the Bulahdelah site.

Lloyd Kingham:

Okay. Let me just-

Speaker 9:

Is there links through transportation of hives and-

Lloyd Kingham:

Right. Good, so that big fellow at Bulahdelah, that's a trace forward from an infested premises. That cluster around Newcastle that's where we are finding this infested spread, so don't mistake beehives that have been put on a truck and taken up there with the edge that I'm trying to find. That answers me the question. How long has this bugger been here? Now, I do appreciate that it's now 20 until eight. I've been pumping you hard for about an hour and a bit, now. I'm keen to let people take the opportunity to go, but again, we're happy to hang around for as long as possible. So I'm going to-

Speaker 9:

[inaudible 00:38:44] getting sore.

Lloyd Kingham:

I can see you, so I'm going to let you ask me probably two or three more questions, and then I will draw a close to the formal proceedings. So (name removed) and we got this one up here.

Speaker 10:

In the middle?

Lloyd Kingham:

Yeah, yeah, yeah, please, and now I've got you, and then we might finish with you if it's an easy one.

Speaker 11:

Right. (name removed) from (location removed). I'm the next epicenter, right? On that yellow fringe-

Lloyd Kingham:

Yep.

Speaker 11:

... there's two, three, half a dozen other people in this room from my area. What are you doing tomorrow? Come to Taree. Let's find this (expletive removed). Sorry. Let's find this edge. Come to (location removed) and test every 700 of my hives, and I'll stand there and burn them in front of you if I've got it.

Lloyd Kingham:

Thank you. Yeah, the lady here. I hear ya, send us some sugar shake results. Tell us what you find.

Speaker 12:

Okay. (name removed) with the Amateur Beekeepers Association. I've got hives scattered, luckily at the moment, about 500 meters inside the purple from the red, so I'm very, very close to going under with my hives, and if that happens, so be it. I'm happy to sacrifice. My question is I've also recently got into native bees, and what you are saying tonight is scaring the living crap out of me about the fentanyl because it sounds like... or Fipronil or whatever it's called.

Lloyd Kingham:

That's correct.

Speaker 12:

It sounds like because native bees are so much smaller, if you put out the bait hives with the Fipronil, then we're going to lose a hell of a lot of our native bees, and if we've you lost the honey bees, our native bees are the only thing we've got left that'll pollinate anything. How can we protect our natives?

Lloyd Kingham:

I think the gentleman answered it. We haven't found a way yet. We're still looking, and there was one more over here.

Speaker 13:

[inaudible 00:41:03] your other one.

Lloyd Kingham:

Of the native hive? Yeah. So, again, the reason why I'm nodded vigorously with the native bee is that it's not a vector of varroa mite. At the moment, we are thinking about how to protect those non vector species. That's definitely a thing. If you think you've got an answer for us, we'd be bloody interested to hear it because, at the moment, there's no magic answers there, but potentially sealing off the hive might be one of them, but I don't want a message to get out there that we are talking about sealing off beehives because that's counter to how we're going to try and kill this in the European hives.

Speaker 13:

[inaudible 00:41:47] You kill the bees anyhow. [inaudible 00:41:57]

Lloyd Kingham:

The natives?

Speaker 8:

The natives. One of the [inaudible 00:42:06] [inaudible 00:42:06]

Lloyd Kingham:

Well, again, we don't have a good answer yet for native bees. If you've got opinions, that is one thing we're interested in hearing about. Yep. Last question, sir.

Speaker 14:

Actually, I have two things to say. One is that, how can you be sure that you're going to kill all of the feral hives by your baiting technique? How?

Lloyd Kingham:

It's using the behavior of the bee itself to rob a sick or a dying colony, so it's based on the international experience about the way that a feral bee population up a tree will seek out unguarded honey and rob it, and take it back to the nest, simply, and the second part of your question?

Speaker 14:

The second part is more a point to make that a lot of us, the Honey Club anyway, attended a meeting yesterday.

Lloyd Kingham:

Last night. Yep.

Speaker 14:

Last night, sorry. Yeah, and we've spoke to the Honeybee Council, the liaison officer that's supposed to be the middleman between us and DPI, and he informed us that there wouldn't be indiscriminate destruction of all hives in between, in the red zone, and that the process was to only destroy hives in the red zone that are lab confirmed target species. So I get your plan. I don't agree with it. Yeah. You're poisoning. On poisoning of the environment, I think there's a much better way to do it. I know you're going to disagree and say, you've already got this plan going, even though you say you're consulting with us, but not really. You just already got your plan anyway. Why did the representation, sorry, the officer, and the president of the New South Wales ABA Association to stand up and say one thing, and then you are coming out today saying, "No. We knew this plan all along."

Lloyd Kingham:

Yeah. Well, I guess the only comment I can make on it is there's a difference between the individual hive kill and then the broader kill, so at the moment, particularly if it's a large number of bees heavily invested, they're the ones that we're knocking out, but the broader campaign will still go on, so I guess ladies and gentlemen tonight we've given you a fairly good overview of what the plan is, what some of the issues are. We're trying to sort through what particular things that we need more information on, but we've also given you a fair dinkum view about how this thing's going to roll over the next three or four weeks. Again, all I can ask you to do is this is a call to arms. You can give us information about where this thing is that we don't currently have the capacity to do.

Lloyd Kingham:

I'm interested in finding that edge and just seeing how this thing's going to roll. For the doubters, find me where they are further away. That means it's away from us. For the people who just want to get rid of it, find me the edge as close as you can to Newcastle, but for this evening, thank you very much, once again, for your attendance, I'm going to grab myself a quick drink and then I'll stand in the middle of the floor, and I'll try and answer as many questions as I can, but once again, thank you very much, ladies and gentlemen.

PART 4 OF 4 ENDS [00:46:03]