



Victorian Apiarists' Association

15th September 2023

Dear member,

The Victorian Apiarists Association Board met on September 13th to discuss the changes in the NSW Varroa situation and to reassess our position in relation to the Varroa response mechanisms currently in place and their suitability moving forwards.

The Board considered the following updates:

- 277 Infested Premises (IPs).
- 10 detections in the existing Kempsey red zone
- One detection in the Western Sydney red zone
- Detections near Barcoogere and Nericon
- The designation of the new Barcoogere IP as a higher risk because of the detected mite load

Although the Board had previously advocated for an eradication program, we are of the opinion that this is now no longer achievable.

Despite the efforts of both State and Federal response units, the continuing detections outside the initial Newcastle area have shown that Varroa has established a footprint far greater than we had hoped for. This footprint is growing.

The VAA Board have revised the current situation and are of the opinion that the Varroa response should move from that of **eradication** to that of **management and education**.

To that end, we would support the immediate cessation to hive destruction and request that as a part of a Varroa Management solution, AHBIC and governing bodies reinvest into an education program for both commercial and hobbyist beekeepers to ensure that both groups are equipped with best practice tools and methodologies.

Regards

John van Weeghel
President, VAA