WESTERN AUSTRALIAN APIARISTS' SOCIETY

BEST-PRACTICE GUIDELINES FOR URBAN BEEKEEPING

These Best-Practice Guidelines have been developed by the members of the Western Australian Apiarists' Association (WAAS). WAAS has taken all reasonable steps to ensure that the information contained in these Guidelines is accurate at the time of publication.

Information contained in this document is provided as general advice only and readers should make appropriate enquiries to determine if the information is suitable for their circumstances and if new information is available.

Version 1 / 2020

Western Australian Apiarists Society

Best-practice guidelines for Urban Beekeeping

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1 INTRODUCTION

The keeping of the European honeybee, *Apis mellifera* is becoming increasingly popular in urban areas. Beekeeping provides honey for home consumption, enjoyment from looking after bees and learning all about them, and the opportunity to meet like-minded people.

The Western Australian Apiarists' Society Inc (WAAS) was established in 1953. It is an incorporated not-for-profit association whose main object is to promote safe and responsible beekeeping. WAAS has around 1000 members, most of whom reside in the Perth metropolitan area. It also has chapters in the greater Bunbury and Margaret River regions. WAAS has several training apiaries in the metropolitan area and in the regional chapters.

The number of hobby beekeepers has increased dramatically in recent years with the growing awareness of the environmental benefits of pollinators and the invention and marketing of the Flow Hive ® making hobby beekeeping more appealing.[1] These guidelines apply equally to the keeping of bees in conventional Langstroth type hives as it does to other types, such as Warrè top bar hives and Flow Hives. It does not however, apply to feral hives that establish themselves on an urban property.

[1] The Flow Hive® is a beehive designed to enable honey to be extracted without having to open the hive.

There are over 3000 beekeepers registered in WA at the time of publishing. Most of them are hobbyists in urban areas. The beekeeping industry in WA is estimated to be worth more than a billion dollars per year, the major part of which is the value of crop and orchard pollination by bees.[2] Hobby beekeepers in WA urban areas can expect to harvest at least 40kg of honey per hive per year whereas commercial migratory beekeepers would expect up to 300kg.

When bees are properly managed, they present a low risk of adverse impact on the community and can be kept by competent beekeepers with minimal intervention by local or state authorities. Bees can and will sting when threatened or stressed. Bee stings are painful and can cause distress to people especially children, and animals. Fortunately, serious incidents involving bee stings are rare in WA.

WAAS has published these guidelines to assist in maintaining a harmonious relationship between beekeepers, other members of their community and local councils. Compliance with the guidelines by beekeepers will ensure that the keeping of bees does not become a nuisance. The key to enacting these guidelines is the competency of the beekeeper.

These guidelines are meant to be a reference and provide standards for beekeeping in urban areas, including:

- Establishing practices which beekeepers should comply with to prevent their beehives from becoming a nuisance.
- Giving the community confidence in the safety of beekeeping.
- Helping local government and regulatory authorities to establish rules for beekeeping.
- Providing a standard against which complaints can be resolved.
- Promoting a competency standard for beekeepers.

All beekeepers should comply with the by-laws that apply within their local government authority jurisdiction; being aware that by-laws vary from one local authority to another. One of the goals in publishing these guidelines is to eventually achieve uniformity in by-laws governing beekeeping across all local authorities.

Members of WAAS are expected to comply with these guidelines.

[2] *Pollination Aware – The Real Value of Pollination in Australia*; Australian Government, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2010.

2 BEST PRACTICE

2.1 BECOME INFORMED

These guidelines are intended to summarise and explain the important aspects of beekeeping for urban beekeepers to follow to ensure that their bees don't become a nuisance. Above all, the beekeeper should be competent and the road to becoming a competent beekeeper involves learning, hands-on training and mentoring. It is important that prior to acquiring bees, new beekeepers undertake a basic training course that includes a practical component or work alongside a competent and experienced beekeeper. The Western Australia Apiarists' Society offers such training to its members in its "An Introduction to Responsible Beekeeping" course.

This guide is not a beekeeping training manual; it identifies aspects of beekeeping that a responsible beekeeper should implement in an urban environment.

2.2 NUMBER OF HIVES ON A PROPERTY

One of the primary controls to minimize the potential for bees to become a nuisance in urban areas is to manage the density, or concentration, of hives. The recommended numbers of hives per property shown in Table 1 should not be exceeded.

Property area	Maximum Number of Hives
up to 400 square metres	2
400-1000 square metres	4
1000-2000 square metres	8
2000-4000 square metres	16
>4000 square metres, if zoned urban	40
For hives on rooftops:	Refer to Property area

Table 1. Recommended maximum density of hives on urban properties.[3]

As a measure to proactively prevent swarming as described in Section 2.8, a beekeeper may decide to split hives in which case it is permitted to retain both the original and the split hives for a period of no longer than three months, subject to the maximum number of hives allowed on the site not being exceeded by fifty percent at any time.

It should be noted that these are the recommended maximum hive numbers; the configuration of the beekeeper's property and of neighbouring dwellings and their surroundings, including gradients of terrain and vegetation, will influence (but not increase) the actual suitable maximum number of hives on a property.

[3] This table complies with the National Best Management Practice for Beekeeping in the Australian Environment, Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, 2007

2.3 Locating Hives

Correct placement of hives is also important. The hives should be in a dry, quiet, sunny area of the property. For security reasons it is often better if they are out of sight from roads and footpaths. This means that hives will be usually located in rear gardens.

Hives are best positioned with the entry facing in a north-easterly direction and with ample winter sunshine, full sun if possible, to minimize the risks of diseases such as Nosema and Chalkbrood. During summer, afternoon shade can be important and, if natural shade is unavailable, can be provided using shade cloth or other materials to assist in preventing overheating inside the hive.

All though hives can be placed next to each other it is often easier if they are positioned with adequate surrounding space for the beekeeper to have access for maintenance. For example, for a traditional Langstroth hive a 1 metre clearance along one side of the hive and 60 centimetres along the opposite side allow easy access to work the hives. A space of approximately 1.5 metres behind the hive allows for easier inspections and working of the hives, as well as an area to place equipment required during an inspection. The bees require very little space at the front entrance but 30 centimetres, and more if possible, in front of the hive entry is advised. In total these dimensions mean that for a single hive and the working area around it will take up an area approximately 2.5 metres by 2.0 metres.

Refer to Fig. 1 below for an example of a layout with suitable clearances.

Multiple hives can be placed next to each other if enough room to work all hives is maintained.

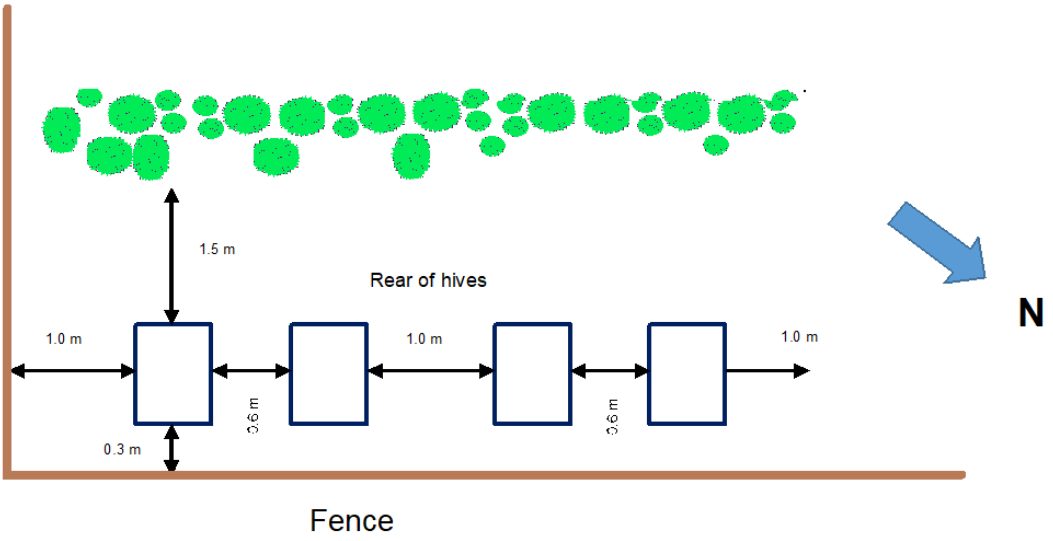

Fig 1. Example of layout and orientation of an apiary with suitable clearances for ease of management

2.4 Managing Flight Paths

A feature of bee behaviour is that they establish a distinct route that will be taken by many bees leaving from or returning to the hive. Therefore, hives should be set up to ensure that the flight path is well clear of people occupying adjoining property or passing by on footpaths or roads or any other area used for public access or recreation. The flight path height should be at least 3 metres at its lowest point above such areas.

Hives should not be placed within 3 metres of a property boundary unless it is defined by a solid barrier, such as a fence or impenetrable plant barrier not less than 1.8 metres high.

Hives should be separated from roads and not in direct line of sight of doors and windows of buildings. It is important to place hives such that bees will not be attracted to bright lights at night-time, which would create a risk that some bees might end up inside a house, an obvious nuisance.

Bees defecate when in flight and this can become a nuisance if their flight path is over a washing line or parked cars.

2.5 DEFENSIVE BEHAVIOUR

Guard bees position themselves at the entrance to hives to protect it from threats. Guard bees always exhibit defensive behaviour even to the extent that they may attack a person who comes within several metres of the hive entrance. The hive entrance should be oriented such that it is not within line of sight of where people or animals might be.

When bees are disturbed at the hive, they release pheromones which recruit other bees to respond defensively. Disturbing the hive by rough physical contact, strong odours and movement close to the hive entrance are all likely to cause defensive behaviour and should be avoided.

External environmental factors, such as wind, ambient temperature and the nature of the nectar which bees are gathering also can affect their temperament; a beekeeper should consider those factors when planning any disturbance of the hive.

Should a colony become defensive it can take some time, even days, for it to return to its normal tranquil state.

Genetics plays a strong part in the temperament of bees and the hive. Bees of docile temperament are far less likely to exhibit defensive and nuisance behaviour. Some strains of bees are more aggressive than others, and feral hives are more likely to be aggressive than a well-managed hive. The genetics of bee colonies kept in urban areas should be maintained with young healthy queens of a docile strain. Docility is one of the main selection criteria in queen bee breeding programs. There are a few queen breeders in Western Australia, most of whom sell through the retail beekeeping outlets. Queens can also occasionally be acquired through WAAS from member beekeepers.

Should, despite good bee keeping practice, a hive's behaviour be consistently aggressive, the beekeeper should replace the queen as soon as possible with a new queen from a reputable breeder.

2.6 PROVIDING WATER

Bees need water for their brood, the production of honey and to help maintain hive temperature and humidity. In hot weather, bees require a lot of water to cool down the hive, up to a litre per hive per day[4]. Bees seek out sources of water, and it is a requirement for a beekeeper to provide it,[5] otherwise the bees will go to swimming pools, bird baths and taps, which is a nuisance.

A beekeeper is required to provide a water source close to their hives, preferably within five metres but not more than 10 metres. Bees prefer water located in a sunny place with capillary moisture, for example wet sand or gravel, the edge of a concrete pond, or floating water weeds. The watering source must be permanent and established before spring. Given bees' propensity to learn and remember, if the water source provided should dry up at any time, the bees will find another source and the new habit will be hard to break.

2.7 WORKING THE HIVE

It is important to be gentle when working with bees. The beekeeper should avoid crushing bees, jerky movements or physical shocks to the colony, which will alarm the bees. When bees become defensive many of them could leave the hive and fly around some distance from it searching for the intruder. A smoker should always be used when working a hive. Smoke should be applied, initially at the hive entrance and then elsewhere as necessary whilst the hive is open. The smoker should be fuelled with untreated material of vegetable origin. Used correctly, smoke is harmless to bees. It works mainly by masking the alarm pheromones that bees use to communicate, and to stimulate them into preparedness to leave the hive quickly in the event of fire. These effects are very short lived.

Hive manipulations should be done as quickly and as calmly as possible to minimise disturbance of the bees. The beekeeper should aim to have the hive open for no more than around twenty minutes.

[4] *Australian Beekeeping Guide*: State Government of Victoria, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2014

[5] *Beekeeping for small landholders in Western Australia*: Government of Western Australia, Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development, Western Australia

The ideal time to work on a hive is when it is warm and sunny and not too windy, between mid-morning and mid-afternoon, when foragers are away from the colony gathering nectar and pollen. Opening hives at dawn or dusk should be avoided and never at night-time.

A beekeeper should avoid working on or harvesting hives in cold, windy or wet conditions. If the hive is open under such conditions, bees will become aggressive. Unless it is essential, a hive should not be opened during a nectar dearth which can cause defensive behaviour or robbing by other bees.

Beekeepers should cooperate with their neighbours when they need to work bees and ensure neighbours are not working or relaxing outdoors at the time. Domestic animals and small children should be kept indoors when bees are being worked, and until the bees have settled down afterwards.

When extracting honey, bees should be removed from honey supers and frames in a manner that will not agitate them. The use of clearer or escape boards to remove bees from honey supers is effective and should be considered. Shaking or brushing bees if done too vigorously will upset the bees. Use of a powered "bee" or leaf blower to clear bees from frames should be absolutely avoided as it will greatly upset them.

If, when working a hive, the bees become very defensive and don't respond to smoke, the beekeeper should consider aborting the work he or she is doing, closing the hive and coming back a few days later.

Good record keeping is the mark of a competent beekeeper. This record should include details such as ambient conditions, number of colonies, colony condition and any actions taken (see Appendix 1)

2.8 PREVENTING SWARMS

Swarming is a natural behaviour of bees to propagate and ensure the survival of their species. It occurs mainly in spring and early summer. Hives should be managed to prevent or minimise swarming. Such management can consist of, as appropriate to the circumstances:

- Replacement of old or failing queen bees with new ones, preferably ones with a low genetic disposition to swarm. Younger queens tend to be more vigorous which helps maintain the health and strength of the colony.
- Splitting of a colony into two or more units creating more space for brood and honey.
- Hive husbandry measures such as providing additional supers for brood rearing and honey storage, creating more space for the queen for laying and raising brood, and regularly replacing old brood comb in the brood chamber with frames fitted with fresh wax foundation.

A beekeeper should endeavour to collect any swarm that has originated from his or her hives and install it in a hive as soon as possible after it has formed into a cluster. Beekeepers should also respond promptly and sympathetically to calls from the public about swarms; in doing so they will be able to provide information about swarming behaviour and relocate a clustered swarm prior to a feral hive being set up, which could become a nuisance.

2.9 Pest and Disease Control

The rigorous adoption of biosecurity is vital to the prevention of disease in the apiary. Disease can enter the hive through procured bees, robber bees, bee products, hive components, beekeeping tools and equipment, and protective clothing especially gloves.[6]

Although Western Australia is relatively pest and disease-free, there are a few honeybee diseases here, of which American Foulbrood (AFB) is the most serious. Beekeepers should manage hives in accordance with the *Australian Honeybee Industry Code of Practice* and be particularly cautious about mixing hive equipment or purchasing hives unless they are from known AFB free apiaries.

AFB is a notifiable disease, and urban beekeepers are required to be familiar with the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Identification and Movement of Stock and Apiaries) Regulations 2013* and act accordingly.[7]

2.10 Storing Equipment

Good storage practices are needed to restrict bees' access to equipment which should not be stored outdoors even for short periods. Beekeepers should follow good housekeeping practices and never leave wax, honey, frames or supers containing honey lying around and accessible to bees. Apart from being an offence, is not good beekeeping practice and can lead to the spreading of disease and aggressive robbing behaviour by bees which is a significant nuisance.

2.11 Notify your neighbours

Beekeepers should be pro-active in keeping their neighbours informed about their beekeeping activities and of the fact that he or she is trained and competent and is maintaining a high standard of beekeeping by complying with this guideline. Before procuring a hive, the beekeeper should inform him/herself about the neighbourhood and of any special situations that might exist, such as the presence of a childcare centre, and ensure that this information is considered in his/her planning.

2.12 Insurance

Beekeepers should be insured against action for damages against harm caused to other persons by their bees or bee products that they sell. Financial members of WAAS are insured against such contingencies.

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[6] *Biosecurity Code of Practice*: Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, 2016

[7] *Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 2007, Western Australia: Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Regulations 2013*

3 OTHER CONSIDERATIONS

3.1 OCCUPATIONAL HEALTH AND SAFETY

An apiary is a workplace[8] and the beekeeper is needs to observe health and safety standards including:

- Planning. Before carrying out an operation on the hive, the beekeeper should plan in detail, and especially identify all the risks presented by the situation and note the things he/she will need to do to manage them.
- Personal protection. When opening a hive, it is strongly recommended to protect the head and face with a hat and veil, or with a bee suit. If a full-length suit is not worn, long-sleeved shirts and long trousers of a light colour should be worn. Gloves should be worn, especially when manipulating frames in the brood box.
- Safe lifting techniques. Care should be taken when working beehives as the honey supers are heavy when full. Enough area, free of obstacles and trip hazards to work the hives should be maintained. Assistance from another person should be considered.
- Beekeepers should take bee stings seriously. It is important have a plan in case of bee stings. They can occur at any stage, and especially if things go wrong. Beekeepers should know how to remove stings and what to do if stings occur and be aware of the signs of an anaphylactic reaction and the appropriate response. An Epipen® should be available at the site of work and the beekeeper must know when and how to use it.
- Beekeepers should avoid working alone.

3.2 USE OF SMOKE IN HIVE MANAGEMENT

Smoke is used by beekeepers as a management aid to subdue honeybees when opening hives.

The use of the bee smoker is subject to fire regulations. On total fire ban days it is prohibited to light and use a smoker and severe penalties apply to non-compliance.

When a smoker is used, the following rules should be followed:

- Light the smoker in an area devoid of combustible material.
- Do not set a lit smoker down on combustible material whilst in use. It is always recommended to keep a lit smoker in a metal bucket.
- The smoker should not be placed where it can be dislodged by wind or easily knocked over.
- The smoker must be extinguished completely when the work has been finished.
- A lit smoker must never be carried on or inside a motor vehicle.
- Water, at least 5 litres, should be readily available at the site in case of a fire.

The entrance of a hive should be smoked before mowing grass or using weed slashers close to the hives. The vibrations created by these machines, along with the smell of exhaust fumes and cut grass upset bees, and operators or people passing by could be stung.

[8] Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984, Western Australia

3.3 TRANSPORTATION OF HIVES

Beekeepers need to take appropriate care when transporting hives[9]. All loads of hives and supers of honey should be closed and secured in accordance with the Road Regulations. The beekeeper needs to take all precautions to avoid loss of bees in travel.

Ideally, beehives should be transported after closing or blocking the hive entrance with a foam strip or similar, considering that:

- This method allows a beekeeper to shift bees a short distance and unload them without being stung.
- Hives must be fitted with adequate ventilation, so bees don't suffocate or overheat.
- Bees can be shifted on a box trailer or on a truck and hives should be prevented from moving or coming apart by securing them in accordance with transport regulations.
- Hives can be closed at night when any bees clustered at the entrance can be smoked and driven inside the hive.
- Shifting should be done at night when all bees are inside the hive and when temperatures are coolest.

Stopping off at fuel stations or travel through built up areas with bright street lighting and traffic lights could cause loss of bees and create a nuisance. Travel routes, refuelling stops, and rest breaks should be carefully planned.

[9] Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, Victoria: *Australian Beekeeping Guide*

3.4 APPLICABLE LEGISLATION

In WA, beekeeping must be carried out in accordance with the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Act 2007* and the *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Identification and Movement of Stock and Apiaries) Regulations 2013*. Beekeepers and their hives must be registered, and all supers branded. [10]

In addition, most local government authorities have by-laws which cover beekeeping in their jurisdiction, many of which are not uniform. Additionally many local government authorities have other regulations that must be complied with if honey is to be processed and sold. It is the responsibility of the beekeeper to ensure they comply with all regulatory requirements.

Very few local government authorities employ staff with beekeeping expertise. This guidance note establishes the practices that beekeepers are required to follow if keeping bees in an urban area, thereby relieving local government authorities of the need to have in-house expertise or enact unnecessarily restrictive bylaws.

[10] *Biosecurity and Agriculture Management (Identification and Movement of Stock and Apiaries) Regulations 2013, Part 9 – Identification and Movement of Apiaries,* Western Australia

4 GLOSSARY

Apiarist / Beekeeper:

A person keeping bees.

Apiary:

A place where honeybees are kept in hives.

Apiculture / Beekeeping:

The management of beehives.

Beehive / Hive:

A modular framed housing for a honeybee colony, which normally contains either a nucleus colony or a standard size colony.

Bee sting:

The injury sustained and inflicted by the venom from a honeybee worker.

Brood Box:

A normal hive box fitted with frames, separated from other boxes (supers) by a queen excluder, in which the queen bee lays eggs and the young bees are raised by nurse bees.

Colony:

A family of bees: workers, a queen and drones

Comb:

A collection of hexagonal wax cells typically built along a plane, which houses honey, pollen and/or brood (eggs, larvae, pupae). In the movable-frame system, comb is synonymous with the term frame or top bar.

Competent beekeeper:

A beekeeper who has undertaken an approved course in beekeeping such as the WAAS "Introduction to Responsible Beekeeping" or has worked under the supervision of a competent beekeeper for enough time to achieve the same result.

Feral bee colony:

A colony of bees which has its nest in a place other than a beehive, e.g. a hollow tree

Flight path:

The distinct route taken by many bees leaving from or returning to their hive.

Foraging bees:

Bees seeking out supply of water or feed; bees naturally forage flowers for nectar and pollen supplies. Bees forage at temperatures of 12C and higher

Harvest:

The removal of honey from a Hive for human consumption.

Honeycomb:

See Comb

Hive:

A container or collection of boxes for housing bees.

Honey extraction:

See Harvest

Honey super:

A super which is full of honey

Nucleus colony:

A small colony that only contains a few thousand bees and a queen. A beekeeper uses a nucleus colony to replace a lost colony, strengthen a weak colony or add a queen to a colony that has lost its queen. It is not considered a production colony and is often referred to as a 'nuc'.

Nuisance:

A private nuisance is where someone stops your use or enjoyment of your land or any rights you have linked to your land. It can include overhanging tree branches, air and noise pollution, and water run-off from a neighbouring property. It also includes the keeping of bees under many local government environment laws.

Pollination:

The transfer of pollen by honeybees from anthers to stigmas of flowers for the purpose of plant fertilisation.

Robber Bees:

Bees attempting to access stored or spilt honey, or honey in another hive.

Smoker:

A device used by beekeepers to produce and direct cool, nontoxic smoke to pacify bees and enable a hive to be worked safely and efficiently

Sticky:

A frame from which most of the honey has been extracted, and which contains honey residue

Super:

A box containing frames, placed above the bottom or brood box of a hive.

Swarm:

A cluster or flying mass of honeybees from a colony that has divided. A swarm contains a queen and 30-70 percent of the workers, all of which have left the hive to start a new one elsewhere

Swarm cells:

Prior to swarming, bees will rear new queen cells, which look distinct from cells containing work or drone brood.

5 RESOURCES

An updated list of resources on urban beekeeping, as well as a PDF version of these best-practice guidelines are available online at www.waas.org.au

5.1 BEEKEEPING CLASSES AND WORKSHOPS

Western Australian Apiarists' Society runs a beginner's beekeeping course "*Introduction to Responsible Beekeeping*" in spring and summer each year. The course covers

- Theory Sessions
  Basic Purpose of Beekeeping, General safety precautions, Assembling and maintaining hives, Beekeeping equipment and obtaining bees, Selecting a bee site, What's in the Brood Box? Reducing Swarming Behaviour & Seasonal Considerations, Biosecurity and Health of the hive, Honey Extraction,
- Practical Sessions
  Lighting Your Smoker, Inspecting Hives-- Open, inspect and close a hive,

More intermediate level and advanced courses are being developed along with other specialist short courses

Some registered training organisations offer a Certificate 3 Beekeeping course in WA

5.2 BEEKEEPING INSTRUCTION BOOKS

Bee Agskills- A Practical Guide to Farm Skills-- NSW Department of Primary Industries

The Australian Beekeeping Manual –Robert Owen

Australian Beekeeping Guide: State Government of Victoria, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2014.

5.3 USEFUL WEBSITES

www.waas.org.au The Western Australian Apiarists' Society Inc.

https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/livestock-animals/livestock-species/bees Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Bees

https://www.agric.wa.gov.au/bam/biosecurity-and-agriculture-management-act-2007 Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development – Biosecurity

https://www.allergy.org.au/hp/anaphylaxis/how-to-give-epipen Australasian society of clinical immunology and allergy – How to give an EpiPen

5.4 REFERENCES, CODES AND STANDARDS

Code of practice Manual tasks, Government of Western Australia, Department of Commerce, Commission for Occupational Safety and Health, 2010.

Pollination Aware – The Real Value of Pollination in Australia; Australian Government, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2010.

Australian Beekeeping Guide: State Government of Victoria, Rural Industries Research and Development Corporation, 2014.

Beekeeping for small landholders in Western Australia: Government of Western Australia, Department of Primary Industry and Regional Development.

Biosecurity Code of Practice: Australian Honey Bee Industry Council, 2016.

Biosecurity and Agricultural Management Act 2007, Western Australia: Biosecurity and Agriculture Management Regulations 2013.

Occupational Safety and Health Act 1984, Western Australia.

Bush Fires Act 1954: *Bushfire Regulations 1954,* Western Australia.

6 APPENDIX 1 – URBAN BEEKEEPING RECORD (EXAMPLE)

Date: _____ Apiary: _____ Time: _____

Temp: ____ °C ☐ Sunny ☐Partly Cloudy ☐ Overcast ☐Windy ☐Drizzle

Water Source: ☐In place ☐ In place, needs to be refreshed ☐Absent

	Hive 1	Hive 2	Hive 3	Hive 4
General Hive Appearance				
Bees active?				
Pollen being bought in?				
Signs of robbing?				
Are the bees calm?				
Entrance reduced				
Number of supers? Number added.				
Reproduction				
Is the brood pattern good?				
Is there capped and uncapped brood?				
Are larvae healthy, white and shiny?				
How many frames are being fully or almost fully used for brood				
Active Swarm or supersedure cells?				
Colony Split				
New Queen Required or Installed				
Capacity				
How many frames are covered by bees				
How many frames have nectar or are capped				
Number of Frames taken for harvest				
Signs of Pests				
Ants present				
Wax moth present				
Unusual number of dead bees				
Is there an odour				
Any testing undertaken				
Comments				

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Produced with thanks to the following **Western Australian Apiarists' Society** members

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"We promote and encourage the art of responsible beekeeping. "

This guide has been produced to improve the community's understanding and appreciation of the important role of bees in our environment and to train in the skills of responsible beekeeping.