Further questions for consultation

**QUESTION 1: Strategy Funding – Timing of the Levy**

At present, the levy is calculated based on the number of apiaries registered by a beekeeper as of 31 March. Most beekeepers comprehensively update their apiary details in an Annual Disease Return, which must be submitted by 1 June each year. Many beekeepers fail to update the management agency of changes to apiary number through the year. This leads to levies being calculated using information that is nine months old.

MAF may change the levy calculation date, to follow closely after the Annual Disease Return due date (e.g. 1 July).

**What is your opinion on changing the timing of the levy payments to follow the Annual Disease Return due date (e.g. 1 July)?**

**QUESTION 2: Clause 8 – Powers used to implement the Strategy**

Many submitters suggested that the Strategy gain the power to declare controlled areas under section 131 of the Biosecurity Act. Subsequently, a significant number of beekeepers have supported adding this power to the Strategy. It has been noted that the Bovine Tb Strategy has this power, and uses it to implement a nationwide zoning Strategy based on disease incidence.

Supporting beekeepers envisage the management agency being able to declare certain regions as being “AFB free” or “low AFB incidence”, and imposing entry requirements on hives being moved into these zones. MAF accepts this could assist in the objective of reducing AFB levels, particularly if AFB levels continue to decline.

There is a risk that beekeepers could attempt to persuade the management agency to put in place controlled areas whose real intent is to exclude “outside” beekeepers, or prevent migratory beekeepers accessing a particular region. MAF would only support this power being added to the Strategy if it is convinced that the management agency is able to use controlled areas in an appropriate manner.

MAF is seeking further input from beekeepers on whether the management agency should be able to declare controlled areas under section 131 of the Biosecurity Act.

**What is your opinion on giving the management agency the powers to define regions of different AFB status, and to impose requirements on hives being moved into these zones?**