



Newsletter 3: April 2011

Cooperative Research Centre bid held over to 2012

This note is to update you on the current position of the bid to establish the Honeybee & Pollination Security CRC (HPS CRC). Firstly, you may be aware that two agencies with significant interest in the honeybee and pollination services area, HAL and GRDC, recently proposed that the HPS CRC bid be merged with the current National Plant Biosecurity CRC (NPB CRC) re-bid attempt.

Our HPS CRC Bid Advisory Committee explored this option with the NPB CRC, but decided against such a merger. The Committee believes that the integrity of the proposed body of work for the honeybee and pollination services sector, as contained in the current HPS CRC bid plan, could not be maintained in that environment.

However, against this background, it is unlikely that the necessary level of industry financial backing will be immediately available, and in the intense competition of the current 14th Round, success of the HPS CRC bid is therefore considered unlikely. The Bid Advisory Committee thus believes that the most appropriate course of action is to now defer the bid submission to Round 15 (June 2012).

Despite this disappointing development, the key drivers for development of the bid remain unchanged. The desirability of a national integrated R&D Centre, as envisaged in the Parliamentary report *'More than Honey'*, has not altered. The vision is that the HPS CRC be a source and focus of 'innovative science that supports a sustainable national beekeeping industry which delivers quality products and reliable services for pollination-dependent horticulture and agriculture'.

The HPS CRC's mission will be to generate and manage excellent science which will deliver tools, techniques and knowledge to honeybee (and honeybee-serviced) industries. The engine room of this mission will be three research programs on enhanced bee breeding and genetics, pest and pathogen control, and pollination enhancement and sustainability. While these research areas will be the priorities for investment, others such as value-adding to honey and social innovation may also be considered for inclusion. The Centre's research endeavours will be complemented by an education program designed to meet end-users' needs.

Development of the HPS CRC bid will continue, and a number of prospective partners have expressed their continuing support. The Bid Advisory Committee (Max Whitten, Gerald Martin, Ben Oldroyd, Des Cannon, Dave Alden, David Dall & Chris Buller) will develop a revised schedule of activities relating to submission of a bid in 2012. This will include opportunities for all prospective members of the HPS CRC to review the now well-defined Centre goals and principles, and to make inputs for supporting the bid's continuing development.

In the meantime, elements of our bid are being progressed separately, with opportunities for new research activities that will provide a springboard for the HPS CRC's work now being actively explored.

While the Bid Advisory Committee can facilitate Centre development, the HPS CRC must be driven by – and ultimately belong to – its members. With this in mind the Committee will continue to circulate information about progress of the bid, and opportunities for your active engagement in the bid development process.

Chris Buller
for the HPS CRC Bid Advisory Committee
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