

Varroa Response Update

New Detections in the Blue Zone (GEZ)

On the 18th February, 2023 the NSW DPI announced new detections in Taree and Wherool Flat, approximately 130km north of Newcastle. These two new detections have been identified through tracing and are a result of movements of hives from the Newcastle complex, red and purple zones, to Taree and Wherool Flat.

Strips and sticky mats in the Taree site have returned low levels of mites in the 2 hives at that location. The Wherool Flat site also had sticky mats examined which detected low levels of mites across a larger apiary.

The hive movements from the Newcastle complex to the new Taree and Wherool Flat sites occurred between mid-December and early February. The DPI compliance teams are investigating the movements and the tracing teams are investigating any hive movements out of the Taree and Wherool Flat during that time.

Any movements out of Taree and Wherool Flat are considered to be low risk due to the low mite levels and the short timeframe. However, it is critically important that beekeepers notify the DPI if their hives were in the area to allow surveillance to clear the hives.

Borders

Movement permits for hives moving out of NSW into QLD and Vic have been temporarily put on hold until tracing is complete. There is no movement allowed from NSW into South Australia currently. The temporary hold on issuing permits should be an interim measure.

What happens now?

The new detections in Taree and Wherool Flat does trigger the response plan to be reviewed by the Consultative Committee to Emergency Plant Pest (CCEPP). The CCEPP will consider all the information, including tracing, and determine the next steps for the response. The CCEPP is likely to meet as soon as the DPI completes tracing and there is sufficient information to make an informed decision.

Beekeepers in the Taree area

It is very important that all beekeepers who have hives in the Taree area, or who have moved hives through the Taree area since December 2022, report the current location of those hives and do not move them from their current location.

Hive locations can be reported to DPI by filling out the [online form](#) at dpi.nsw.gov.au or calling 1800 084 881.