



OIA 19-E-0439 /docCM 6022211

s9(2)(a)

Dear s9(2)(a)

Thank you for your Official Information Act request to the Department of Conservation, dated 2 July 2019. You requested the following:

1. *Can you please provide the information you have on file regarding pesticides and Honey Bees*
2. *Can you please forward a copy of the following reports: DOC-2321888, DOC-2345537; DOC-2345538; DOC-2345539; DOC-2345540; DOC-2345541; DOC-2321757*
3. *When monitoring pesticide operations and bees are affected, does DOC inform MPI?*
4. *Please provide copies of correspondence between DOC and MPI in relation to Pindone and Honey Bees from August 2014.*

Before answering your questions, I would like to provide some context about beekeeping on public conservation land.

The Department of Conservation's priority is to maintain and restore the diversity of our natural heritage. Requests for land use, including for honey production, are considered within the context of the benefit to conservation.

DOC recognises the value of honey to the New Zealand economy and the potential benefit of appropriate use of public conservation land as a resource.

Beekeepers must apply to the Department for a concession to place beehives on public conservation land:

[www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/beekeeping-on-public-conservation-land/](http://www.doc.govt.nz/get-involved/apply-for-permits/business-or-activity/beekeeping-on-public-conservation-land/)

Concessionaires receive notification of DOC pesticide operations and are required to comply with any restrictions the department places on their activity to allow pesticide operations to take place. This may involve moving hives.

As well as complying with DOC requirements, beekeepers are required to meet the requirements of New Zealand's Food Act as well as the Australia New Zealand Food Standards Code, which covers the labelling and composition of food in New Zealand and the requirements of food standards for honey. This would include notifying MPI if they suspect their hives have been contaminated with toxins:

[www.mpi.govt.nz/processing/honey-and-bee-products/](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/processing/honey-and-bee-products/)

Furthermore, the bee Code of Practice (COP) sets the operational code for edible bee product, including honey.

[www.mpi.govt.nz/processing/honey-and-bee-products/honey-and-bee-product-processing/documents-for-honey-and-bee-products/code-of-practice-for-bee-products/](http://www.mpi.govt.nz/processing/honey-and-bee-products/honey-and-bee-product-processing/documents-for-honey-and-bee-products/code-of-practice-for-bee-products/)

Your questions and our responses are listed below:

*1. Can you please provide the information you have on file regarding pesticides and Honey Bees.*

I have released all the information that exists in the Department Pesticide Information Reviews applying to pesticides and bees (2 pages of excerpts).

*2. Can you please forward a copy of the following reports:  
DOC-2321888, DOC-2345537; DOC-2345538; DOC-2345539; DOC-2345540; DOC-2345541; DOC-2321757*

DOC-2321757 is the Landcare Toxicology Report for the bee samples, which we have released with this request. For context, we have also provided an email from the Landcare Research scientist to the Department of Conservation, explaining the sampling rationale for these tests (DOC-2321888).

DOC-2345537 and DOC-2345538 are photos of bee samples, also released with this request.

DOC-2345539, DOC-2345540 and DOC-2345541 are documents that are unrelated to your request (39 – a calendar schedule; 40 – non-existent; 41 - a holiday park budget document). This sequence of numbers appears to be a data input error. It was likely due to the automatic updating function when the bee photo entry was copied three times into the excel spreadsheet which appears to be referred to in this request. The entries in this spreadsheet have now been amended. Thank you for bringing this to our attention.

*3. When monitoring pesticide operations and bees are affected, does DOC inform MPI?*

If DOC becomes aware of beehives being affected by one of our pesticide operations we inform the Ministry for Primary Industries, although we are not required to do so.

*4. Please provide copies of correspondence between DOC and MPI in relation to Pindone and Honey Bees from August 2014.*

We have provided emails between DOC and MPI about this matter, as tabled below.

The following documents fall within the scope of your request and are attached:

<b>Item</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Document description</b>	<b>Decision</b>
1	29/7/2019	All information held on file regarding pesticides and Honey Bees, from the Department of Conservation's Pesticide Information Reviews	Released in full
2	3/11/2014	MPI/DOC emails pindone contacts DOC -605321	Released in part under Section 9(2)(a)
3	11/11/2014	Landcare Toxicology report DOC - 2321757	Released in part under Section 9(2)(a)
4	11/11/2014	2 x Bee photographs that accompanied the toxicology report DOC - 2345537 and DOC - 2345538	Released in full
5	12/11/2014	Email explaining sampling regime DOC-2321888	Released in part under Section 9(2)(a)
6	10/12/2014	MPI/DOC emails re system audit visit	Released in part under Section 9(2)(a)

I have decided to release the relevant parts of the documents listed above, subject to information being withheld under section 9(2)(a) of the Official Information Act, to protect the privacy and the personal contact details of officials.

In making my decision, I have considered the public interest considerations in section 9(1) of the Official Information Act.

You are entitled to seek an investigation and review of my decision by writing to an Ombudsman as provided by section 28(3) of the Official Information Act.

Please note that this letter (with your personal details removed) and enclosed documents may be published on the Department's website.

Yours sincerely,

s9(2)(a)

Amber Bill  
Director Threats, Biodiversity  
for Director-General