

## **Inaugural Meeting Update**

The ApiNZ Biosecurity/GIA Focus Group met in Wellington on 25 May 2017 with the purpose of progressing a GIA for the apiculture industry.

The current myrtle rust biosecurity incursion was highlighted as an example of why the industry should become a signatory to a GIA.

The introduction focused on a discussion outlining the reasons for a GIA and the challenges that we may face. The focus document for the session was the GIA PowerPoint presentation, 'Fact not Fiction,' as presented at the 2014 Whanganui conference.

The Manager GIA Secretariat along with representatives from MPI joined the meeting and presented a 'Setting the Scene' general update of GIA. This was an invaluable discussion that helped get the whole focus group up to speed with the status of GIA. The MPI team addressed all questions raised and encouraged further dialogue as soon as the focus group had drafted a plan of action.

It is anticipated that GIA will have 20 primary sector signatories by the end of the year. This is equivalent to 80% of the primary sector, leaving very little reason why the apiculture industry should remain on the outside, particularly with the cross over effect pollination brings to the other sectors.

There is a need for ApiNZ to sign now, as a seat at the GIA table gives apiculture a voice and currently we are sitting in a very exposed position. As a non-signatory, industry will pay through the cost recovery provisions that are expected to come in to force within the next 12 months. This strengthens the urgency for apiculture to be part of the decision-making process.

GIA is the way of the future. It is about having a strong industry profile, strong operational agreements with other key sectors and ensuring we have an influence on outcomes that affect our industry.

The recommendation was clear; the first step was to sign to a minimum commitment. Only then are we able to start the process of negotiating operational agreements and setting fiscal caps. These can be structured similarly to other industries operational agreements e.g. is it a bacterium threat or pest? There are only two finalised operational agreements to date, fruit fly and kiwifruit, with another two that are nearing completion, stink bug and FMD with the only one active being fruit fly.

The meeting proved to be very positive and constructive and showed we had a diverse and complementary talent to pursue the task assigned.