

Domestic Animals (Beekeeping) Code of Practice 2014 (No 1)

Disallowable instrument DI2014— 291

made under the

Domestic Animals Act 2000, section 143 (Codes of practice)

EXPLANATORY STATEMENT

Section 143 of the *Domestic Animals Act 2000* (the Act) provides that the Minister may approve codes of practice setting out the duties of owners, carers and keepers of domestic animals if the animals are kept on land in relation to which a residential lease has been granted. The examples in section 143 provide that bees are domestic animals for the purposes of the section. Section 143 (3) of the Act provides that an approved code of practice is a disallowable instrument.

This instrument approves the *Code of Practice for Beekeeping in Residential Areas of the ACT* as a code of practice made under section 143 of the Act.

Explanation of the code of practice

Overview

The objective of the *Code of Practice for Beekeeping in Residential Areas in the ACT* is to outline the duties of owners, carers and keepers of honeybees (*Apis mellifera*), which under the *Domestic Animals Act 2000* are classified as domestic animals. It also provides advice to the general public on dealing with bee swarms.

The Code provides minimum standards for the management of urban beehives and is a reference point for amateur backyard beekeepers as well as members of the public concerned about beekeeping practices in their neighbourhood. Adherence to the standards set out in the Code, which are voluntary, will help limit the introduction and spread of bee diseases and parasites and the inconvenience to neighbouring residents due to the presence of bees.

Provisions of the Code of Practice in detail

1. **Introduction** outlines the basis of and use for the Code of Practice.
2. **Definitions** at the end of the Code of Practice forms part of the Code.

3. Bee diseases and parasites provides information on the declared bee diseases in the ACT under the *Animal Diseases Act 2005* and advice on how to minimise the risk of spreading diseases when selling and buying used beekeeping equipment.

4. Animal nuisance aspects of urban beekeeping provides residents with advice on what to do if they are affected by an animal nuisance caused by bees. It also sets recommended limits on the number of hives on residential leases to minimise the risk of conflict between people and honeybees.

5. Management of Hives provides technical advice to beekeepers on:

- Hive placement;
- Managing honeybee colonies to minimise swarming and how deal with swarms in residential areas;
- Hiving swarms originating from a beekeepers colony;
- What to do if swarm settles on public or private property;
- What to do to prevent bees from being attracted to stored spare equipment;
- The importance of providing adequate water for the colony;
- How to maintain a quite strain of bee to prevent a colony becoming aggressive;
- How to prevent honeybees from robbing honey from other hives when nectar is scarce. This helps prevent the spread of disease.

6. General Advice provides advice to the public on what safety precautions should be taken if a swarm of bees is encountered and who to contact to have it removed.