

NATIONAL WORKING PARTY ON PESTICIDE APPLICATIONS

Chair's Quarterly Report

July 2014

The National Working Party on Pesticide Applications (NWPPA) is working to bring a national, coordinated technical approach to spray drift issues which I believe has been acknowledged and recognised by stakeholders.

Our vision is that the regulatory system is science based and recognises the use of drift reduction technologies, better education and practice to enable the use of smaller, practical buffer zones.

International workshop for regulators

The National Working Party hosted an international workshop for regulators in Brisbane from 17 to 19 June 2014. The workshop was entitled Spray Drift Risk Assessment: Opportunities for International Harmonisation. Kareena Arthy, CEO of the Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority (APVMA), helped me co-chair the event.

Mr Ted Kucknicki from the Canadian Pest Management Regulatory Agency gave the keynote address on the current systems used in Canada for spray drift risk assessment. Mr Jay Ellenberger, from the United States Environmental Assessment Agency provided an update on the how the US undertakes spray drift risk assessment. Dr Paul Hamey from the United Kingdom Chemicals Directorate provided an update on the systems used in the UK, while Professor Paul Miller from the UK's National Institute of Agricultural Botany (Silsoe Spray Applications Unit), provided his views on harmonisation opportunities for data sharing and information. Mr Richard Mohan from New Zealand's Environmental Protection Agency provided an update on NZ's approach to spray drift risk assessment.

Dr Andrew Hewitt from the University of Queensland provided an update on models used by regulators for spray drift risk assessments. Mr David Rumbold from APVMA informed the



Fig. 1 Regulators at the workshop watching a demonstration of the aerial spraying of water

workshop about the spray drift policy review that is underway in Australia. I believe that there is a genuine desire for greater international cooperation on this issue. We hope to be able to circulate a copy of these presentations at a later date.

On day 2, delegates travelled to the University of Queensland's campus at Gatton to see first-hand modern spray drift technologies as well as hear about and see the science behind the new technologies. The NWPPA is very thankful for the time and effort put in by staff at UQ to demonstrate the research that they are undertaking at the wind tunnel. It is hoped that there will be a greater reliance on testing done in wind tunnels rather than having to rely on costly field testing (Fig. 1).

The NWPPA is also very grateful to HARDI Australia P/L who demonstrated their new Saritor II Self Propelled Unit (Fig.2). We would especially like to thank Will Langdon who brought the Unit up from Adelaide for the demonstration.

Peter Travis, on behalf of the Aerial Agricultural Association of Australia, explained the working of an agricultural aircraft and gave regulators a first-hand demonstration of aerial spraying over a field on the Gatton Campus. Jorg Kitt and colleagues from Croplands and Nufarm demonstrated their



WeedIT sprayer and the new quantum mist sprayers (Fig. 3), and Dr Jerome Schleier and Dr Holger Tank from Dow AgroSciences demonstrated and spoke about Dow's new drift reducing formulation. The feedback from delegates was very positive, allowing regulators to see and hear about new technologies and the science that underpins them.

Day 3 provided an opportunity for regulators to meet face-to-face and discuss the outcomes from the previous days. In an email to me after the workshop Kareena Arthy said: *"The importance of accommodating the regulator session on the third day of the workshop cannot be understated. It provided a unique opportunity for the broader Australian spray drift regulatory community to learn more about the Canadian and New Zealand spray drift risk assessment frameworks first hand, including discussions on their history and certain specific details."*

She went on to say: *"Several learnings from the entire program are now being considered by the spray drift project which will soon be evident in both formal and informal communications about the direction of the policy review. The APVMA looks forward to continuing and improving our already productive relationship with the NWPPA."*



Fig. 2 HARDI Australia's Saritor II Self Propelled Unit

APVMA spray drift policy update

The APVMA commenced a review of the spray drift policy in September 2013, as advised at the 2013 NWPPA Annual Meeting. The review is being led

by Dave Rumbold, formerly of the Victorian Department of Environment and Primary Industries, and aims to identify practical improvements, recognise improved practices and implement more efficient processes by focusing on four key themes:

Standard scenarios – How spray drift deposition is determined.

Assessments – How the level of concern is determined for each sensitive area.

Drift reduction scheme – How strategies for reducing spray drift will be acknowledged to allow users to reduce the no-spray zone distances, etc.

Labelling – How spray drift management requirements will be presented on the product label within the National Registration Scheme framework.

An update on this review was presented at the NWPPA Annual Meeting on 29 May 2014 and an updated [APVMA spray drift webpage](#) will be available soon. Formal consultation on proposed changes to the policy will commence later in 2014, but any questions or proposals are welcome prior to this by calling 02 6217 4744 or emailing spraydrift@apvma.gov.au.

The following section is reproduced from the APVMA website.

Background on the current spray drift policy

Since 2010 the APVMA have been implementing a policy known as the Operating Principles in Relation to Spray Drift Risk. To date, this policy has been a mandatory consideration for all new, unique agricultural chemical products. Once the current review is completed, the policy will be expanded to other application types and for the reconsideration of existing products.

Depending upon the outcome of specific product assessments, the current policy may result in mandatory label instructions that include:

- Minimum droplet size for ground boom or aerial applications (Fig. 4).
- Wind speed operating range of 3 to 20 km/hr.



- Maximum boom height for ground boom application or nozzle orientation or shut off requirement for orchard or vineyard equipment.
- Not applying the product when there is a surface temperature inversion present (refer to the [Grains Research and Development Corporation factsheet](#) for further information).
- Observing downwind no-spray zones from certain identified sensitive areas (refer to [the Department of Environment and Primary Industries Victoria factsheet](#) for further information).

Further background information on the current policy can be found at the links below, noting that this information will be redeveloped extensively and aligned with the APVMA regulatory guidelines at the conclusion of the review.

[Operating Principles in Relation to Spray Drift Risk](#)

which describe the methods and scientific principles the APVMA uses to assess and manage spray drift issues.

[Summary of the final round of public submissions](#) on the policy from February 2008 after a five year development period which included four rounds of public consultation and two national forums.

[Preliminary Regulatory Impact Statement](#), on the policy from February 2008 which provides background to the development of the policy and satisfied Office of Best Practice Regulation requirements.

[Labelling requirements from the Ag Labelling Code](#), which replicate the requirements set out in the Operational Notice entitled New Registration Application and Label Requirements in Relation to Spray Drift Management, that became effective March 2010.

[A supplement](#) to this former Operational Notice that became effective November 2010.

[Protective no-spray zones](#) and information on how these zones are determined.

[Standard spray drift risk assessment scenarios](#) used by the APVMA to tailor its risk assessments to the most common situations.

[Further information on Environmental Assessments](#) from the data guidelines.

[Drift reducing technology \(DRT\) incentives program](#) that is designed to promote and encourage the adoption of new and improved technologies and better spray drift management methods.

[Priority list of chemicals for spray drift label reviews](#) for the assessment and updating of the labels of all currently registered products subject to spray drift regulation to include comprehensive instructions for managing spray drift risk.



Fig. 3 Cropland's quantum mist sprayer

NWPPA Annual Meeting

The 2014 NWPPA Annual Meeting was held on Thursday 29 May at the Federal Golf Club in Canberra. Dr Donald Ward, Manager, AgVet Chemical (Domestic and International) with the Australian Government's Department of Agriculture, provided an update on Council of Australian Governments and other AgVet chemical reforms. Dr Jason Lutze, Director, Pesticides Residues, APVMA, outlined the reforms that are currently underway within APVMA, and Mr David Rumbold, Spray Review Officer (APVMA), provided an update on the spray drift policy review.



Dr Andrew Hewitt, then provided an update on research currently being undertaken by the University of Queensland using the wind tunnel research facility at Gatton and the work being undertaken on behalf of the Grape and Wine Research and Development Corporation on a Viticulture Field Trial Program investigating the field performance of sprayers. Mr Nicholas Woods from the NWPPA Secretariat followed with a detailed update on the other research projects endorsed by the NWPPA.

Mr Matt Kealley, Manager, Environment, Canegrowers, outlined the work done by the sugar industry in Queensland to develop and implement the Smartcane Best Management Practice with consultants Mr Trevor Ranford and Mr Guy Rischmueller providing their views on the need for changes in training for pesticide applications.

The meeting finished with Dr Rohan Rainbow, Managing Director, Crop Protection Australia, providing an outline of the work that he was doing to coordinate actions in relation to minor use permits for pesticide product registration.

The Secretariat is currently working on a dedicated website to communicate our work which it is hoped will be launched at the end of July 2014. Copies of the presentations will be available on that website.

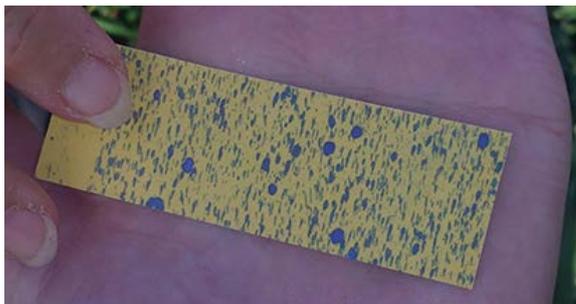


Fig. 4 Demonstration of the detection of spray droplets (water) on test paper

NWPPA Executive Committee 2014–15

Jorg Kitt, who has been the Nufarm representative on the Executive Committee since the beginning, has left that company and their new representative is Gerard Barbell. I would like to thank Jorg for his work with the Executive Committee, particularly his

ability to take a very practical, farmer approach to the issues that we dealt with. Jorg has indicated his willingness to continue to assist with the work of the NWPPA and I was particularly grateful for Jorg's assistance to arrange demonstrations of equipment for the field day at the international workshop for regulators.

As this could be the last year for the NWPPA, it was agreed at the Annual Meeting that the current Executive continues as the Executive Committee for 2014–15 (see below).

NWPPA Executive Committee 2014–15

Gavan Cattanach	Chair
Gerard Barbell	Nufarm
Jolyon Burnett	Australian Macadamia Society
Ross Giles	HVP Plantations
Melanie Gengos	Farmoz
Keith Hayes	Grape and Wine RDC
Phil Hurst	AAAA
Alastair James	CropLife Australia
Matt Kealley	Canegrowers
Pete Mailler	Grain Producers Australia
Joe Murrell	Australian Groundsprayers Association
Jodi Pedrana	HAL
Trevor Ranford	Horticulture Industries
Colin Sharpe	Dow
Michael Schaefer	AusChem
Ken Young	GRDC

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