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# Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No. 12)

under the

## Biosecurity Act 2015

I, KATHRYN GOTT, Deputy Chief Plant Protection Officer, with the delegated authority of the Secretary pursuant to section 379(1) of the *Biosecurity Act 2015* (**the Act**), make the following emergency order under Part 5 of the Act.



Dated this 10th day of July 2022

Time: 3.40 PM

### KATHRYN GOTT

Deputy Chief Plant Protection Officer  
Department of Primary Industries  
Department of Regional NSW

## Part 1 Preliminary

### 1 Name of emergency order

This emergency order is the *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No. 12)*.

### 2 Commencement

This emergency order commences at the time a copy of the order is first published in the NSW Government Gazette or on the Department's website.

### 3 Duration of emergency order [s 45(e), s 48]

This emergency order has effect for a period of 6 months from the date of commencement.

#### 4 Emergency zone [s 45(b), s 49]

- (1) The *Varroa mite eradication emergency zone*, as shown in red on the map, are the areas within a 10 kilometre radius of an infected premises.
- (2) The *Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone*, as shown in purple on the map, are the areas within a 25 kilometre radius of an infected premises, excluding the Varroa mite eradication emergency zone.
- (3) The *Varroa mite notification emergency zone*, as shown in yellow on the map, are the areas within a 50 kilometre radius of an infected premises, excluding the Varroa mite eradication and surveillance emergency zones.
- (4) The *Varroa mite general emergency zone*, as shown in blue on the map, is the state of New South Wales, excluding the Varroa mite eradication, surveillance and notification emergency zones.
- (5) In this clause, *map* means the map published on the NSW Department of Primary Industries website at [Varroa mite emergency response \(nsw.gov.au\)](https://www.nsw.gov.au/Varroa-mite-emergency-response) at the time this order commences.

**Note:** Schedule 1 to this Order contains a copy of the map and is included for information purposes only.

#### 5 Biosecurity matter and biosecurity risk [s 44(1), s 45(a)]

- (1) The biosecurity matter which is the subject of the biosecurity emergency is Varroa mite.
- (2) The biosecurity risk that is the subject of the biosecurity emergency is the risk of an adverse effect on the economy and the community that arises from the introduction, presence and spread of Varroa mite within the State.

**Note:** A biosecurity emergency was declared by the *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022* dated 24 June 2022.

#### 6 Grounds for Order [s 44(2)]

- (1) The basis for being satisfied that there is a current biosecurity risk arising from the presence of Varroa mite in the State, is:
  - (a) Varroa mite is prohibited matter throughout the State.
  - (b) On 22 June 2022, Varroa mite was detected at two properties in Mayfield and Mayfield West, City of Newcastle.
  - (c) Varroa mite has been detected at several properties in New South Wales, and it is suspected to be present at numerous other properties across New South Wales.
- (2) Varroa mite is spread by bees and hives that have been in contact with bees for the previous 10 days.
- (3) The basis for being satisfied that the biosecurity risk arising from the presence of Varroa mite in the State may have a significant biosecurity impact is that Varroa mite will have a significant economic impact on the beekeeping industry, which

will in turn significantly impact pollination dependant industries and the production of horticulture in Australia.

## **7 Revocation of the Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Orders 2022 [s 60(1)]**

- (1) Except as provided by this clause, these emergency orders are revoked:
  - (a) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022* dated 24 June 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 276 of Friday 24 June 2022 at pages 1 to 7,
  - (b) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No.2)* dated 26 June 2022, published on the Department's website,
  - (c) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No.3)* dated 28 June 2022, published on the Department's website,
  - (d) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No.4)* dated 30 June 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 288 of 1 July 2022 at pages 1 to 10,
  - (e) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No.5)* dated 2 July 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 290 of 2 July 2022 at pages 1 to 11,
  - (f) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No.6)* dated 3 July 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 291 of 3 July 2022 at pages 1 to 11,
  - (g) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No. 7)* dated 4 July 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 293 of 4 July 2022 at pages 1 to 11,
  - (h) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No. 8)* dated 5 July 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 294 of 5 July 2022 at pages 1 to 11,
  - (i) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No. 9)* dated 7 July 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 297 of 7 July 2022 at pages 1 to 11,
  - (j) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No. 10)* dated 8 July 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 307 of 8 July 2022 at pages 1 to 11, and
  - (k) *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022 (No. 11)* dated 9 July 2022, published in the *NSW Government Gazette* No. 309 of 9 July 2022 at pages 1 to 12.
- (2) Clause 5(1) of the *Biosecurity (Varroa Mite) Emergency Order 2022* dated 24 June 2022 is not revoked.

## 8 Definitions

In this emergency order:

**apiary equipment** means anything that has been used or is designed to be used in relation to the acquisition or keeping of bees or in relation to the processing, handling or storing of apiary products, but does not include:

- (a) a hive,
- (b) a permitted bee feeder,
- (c) an intermediate bulk carrier,
- (d) a honey drum,
- (e) a pail,
- (f) new apiary equipment that has never been in contact with bees, or
- (g) apiary equipment that has been treated using the irradiation treatment method and has not had contact with bees since that treatment.

**Note:** *hive* and *permitted bee feeder* are separately defined.

**apiary product** means anything produced by bees and includes pollen collected by bees, but does not include:

- (a) honey that has been processed,
- (b) rendered beeswax, or
- (c) new beeswax foundation.

**bee** has the same meaning as in the Act.

**brood box** means the component of the hive used by the queen to lay eggs for raising new bees and includes the frames.

**extract**, for honey means the process of removing honey from honeycomb so that it is isolated in a liquid form.

**feral bees** mean bees in the wild that have returned to a wild state.

**hive** means an artificial receptacle designed for housing living bees and its contents, but does not include:

- (a) a new hive that has never been in contact with bees, or
- (b) a hive that has been treated using the irradiation treatment method and has not had contact with bees since that treatment.

**Note:** A Hive includes a nucleus beehive.

**hive material** includes honey, wax and any live or dead insect material contained in or on the honey super or any apiary equipment or that has leaked from the honey super or apiary equipment.

**honey drum** means a drum used for mass handling, transport and storage of up to 300 litres of honey.

**honey super** means the honey super component of the hive that is used to store a bee's honey and includes the frames and honey.

**infected premises** are premises where a mite species of the genus *Varroa* has been detected by either:

- (a) being observed by a person who is a technical expert, or a person who has undergone training by a technical expert in the field of identification of *Varroa* mite; or
- (b) diagnostic samples from a site have been received at a Department laboratory and confirmed positive by a diagnostician.

**intermediate bulk container** means an industrial-grade container engineered for the mass handling, transport and storage of up to 1000 litres of honey.

**irradiation treatment method** means treatment by irradiation at a gamma radiation dose of at least 10 kilo Gray.

**new beeswax foundation** means a flat sheet of beeswax that is embossed with the shape of the base of the cell, either manufacture by casting or rolling, and from which any impurities have been removed including any *Varroa* mite potentially present and, has not been in contact with bees after its manufacture.

**pail** means a container with a capacity of up to 25 kilograms, intended to be used for mass handling, transport and storage of honey.

**permitted bee feeder** means a device for feeding bees installed in or attached to a hive and that can only be accessed from inside that hive, by the bees living in that hive. A permitted bee feeder must either:

- (a) be new; or
- (b) must not have contact with bees in the 10 days before it is installed or attached.

**Note:** Sugar and sugar syrup left in the open for bees to access from other than a hive is not a permitted bee feeder.

**person in charge**, in relation to premises, an animal or thing includes:

- (a) the owner of the premises, animal or thing,
- (b) a person who has the premises, animal or thing in their possession, care, custody or control.

**premises** means:

- (a) a parcel of land, or
- (b) several parcels of land which:
  - (i) are contiguous with one another or are separated from one another only by a road, river, creek or other watercourse, and
  - (ii) constitute or are worked as a single property, or
- (c) a single apiary site or apiary range, identified on the NSW Government BPass map at [view sites public \(nsw.gov.au\)](http://view.sites.public.nsw.gov.au).

**processed**, for honey, means:

- (a) honey that is for human consumption and suitable for retail sale or purchase at a food business, as defined in section 6, *Food Act 2003*,
- (b) honey in an intermediate bulk container,

- (c) honey in a honey drum,
- (d) honey in a pail, and
- (e) any other honey that has been processed and packaged in such a way as to exclude Varroa mite.

**rendered beeswax** means raw beeswax that has been rendered using water and strained and from which any impurities have been removed including any Varroa mite potentially present and, has not been in contact with bees after its manufacture.

**surveillance action** means any of the following:

- (a) shaking bees in fine sugar to enable the dislodgement of Varroa mite so to be able to detect the presence of Varroa mite (**sugar shake**),
- (b) uncapping the bee brood to inspect the brood for the presence of Varroa mite (**brood uncapping**), or
- (c) washing bees in ethanol to detach varroa mites to inspect for the presence of Varroa mite (**ethanol washing**).

**the Act** means the *Biosecurity Act 2015*.

**Varroa mite** means *Varroa destructor*.

**Varroa mite general emergency zone** – see clause 4.

**Varroa mite eradication emergency zone** – see clause 4.

**Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone** – see clause 4.

**Varroa mite notification emergency zone** – see clause 4.

## **Part 2 Emergency Measures – All emergency zones**

### **9 Persons or class of persons to whom the measures in this Part apply [s 45(d)]**

- (1) All persons in these emergency zones must comply with and implement the emergency measures specified in this Part:
  - (a) Varroa mite general emergency zone,
  - (b) Varroa mite eradication emergency zone,
  - (c) Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone, and
  - (d) Varroa mite notification emergency zone.
- (2) If this Part specifies that another person or class of persons must comply with and implement an emergency measure, then the measure only applies to that person or class of person.

### **10 Prohibitions on movement [s 50, s 51(c)]**

- (1) Unless otherwise permitted by this emergency order, a person must not move a bee or bees into, out of or within:
  - (a) the Varroa mite general emergency zone,
  - (b) the Varroa mite eradication emergency zone,

- (c) the Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone, or
  - (d) the Varroa mite notification emergency zone.
- (2) A person may move a bee or bees within premises to undertake a surveillance action, but if the premises are in more than one emergency zone, the person must not move the bees into a different emergency zone.
  - (3) A person may move a bee or bees within premises for the purposes of disposal and destruction, if directed to by an authorised officer.
  - (4) Unless otherwise permitted by this emergency order, a person must not move a hive or any bee feeder into, out of or within:
    - (a) the Varroa mite general emergency zone,
    - (b) the Varroa mite eradication emergency zone,
    - (c) the Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone, or
    - (d) the Varroa mite notification emergency zone.
  - (5) A person may move a permitted bee feeder into and within premises to feed bees.
  - (6) A person may move a hive or a permitted bee feeder within premises for disposal and destruction, if directed by an authorised officer.
  - (7) An authorised officer is authorised to move hives or any bee feeder for disposal and destruction, if the bees from the hive have been destroyed in accordance with clause 18(2).
  - (8) A person in charge of premises must not permit another person to move a bee or bees onto those premises.
  - (9) A person must not accept or receive a bee or bees that have been moved by another person.

## **11 Testing and surveillance [s 50, s 51(a), (i), s 91(1)(a), s 122(1)(a)]**

- (1) A person in charge of hives must not move, remove or interfere with any testing material or equipment placed in a hive by an authorised officer as part of surveillance for Varroa mite.
- (2) An authorised officer is authorised to move bees or a Varroa mite carrier for the purpose of undertaking diagnostic testing or any other testing.
- (3) An authorised officer is authorised to destroy bees in the process of undertaking testing that is a surveillance action.
- (4) In this clause, a *Varroa mite carrier* includes:
  - (a) bees,
  - (b) apiary equipment,
  - (c) an apiary product, and
  - (d) a hive.

## **12 Feeding bees [s 50, s 51(a)]**

A person may only feed bees using a permitted bee feeder.

## **13 Movement of hives for irradiation [s 50, s 51(c)]**

- (1) A person may move a hive for the purpose of treatment using the irradiation method if the hive:
  - (a) has had no contact with bees for 21 days before the transport date, and
  - (b) is double bagged or wrapped in a way that does not allow contact with bees and remains in that state until it reaches the place at which the treatment will be conducted.
- (2) Before the hive is transported, the person must clean any apiary equipment that has contact with the hive to remove any hive material and must not move that equipment out of the emergency zone in which the hive was originally located.

## **Part 3 Emergency Measures - Varroa mite eradication emergency zone**

### **14 Persons or class of persons to whom the measures in this Part apply [s 45(d)]**

- (1) All persons in charge of bees, hives, apiary equipment or premises in the Varroa mite eradication emergency zone must comply with and implement the emergency measures specified in this Part.
- (2) If this Part specifies that another person or class of persons must comply with and implement an emergency measure, then the measure applies to that person or class of person.

### **15 Notification of bees [s 50, s 51(a)]**

- (1) A person in charge of any bees must notify the Department of the location of those bees.
- (2) A person in charge of premises who becomes aware of a colony of feral bees which is located on the premises must notify the Department of the location that colony.
- (3) A person who becomes aware of, or suspects the presence of, a colony of feral bees because of any consultation or other professional work carried out at premises must notify the Department of the location of that colony.
- (4) Notifications under this clause must be made:
  - (a) by telephone, to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881, or
  - (b) by electronic transmission, using a form at the location [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa)

**Note:** Section 30 of the Act imposes a biosecurity duty on the owner or person in charge of an animal or thing to immediately notify the Department if the person suspects the presence of prohibited matter in the State.

Notifications may be made by telephone to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

## **16 Prohibitions on movement [s 50, s 51c]**

A person must not move apiary equipment into or out of the Varroa mite eradication emergency zone, unless the person is undertaking a surveillance action and the bees remain on the same premises.

## **17 Prohibition on tampering with hives and interfering with bees [s 50, s 51(a)]**

- (1) Unless permitted in this clause, a person must not:
  - (a) tamper with a hive, including by removing honey or honey comb from a hive, or
  - (b) disturb, interfere with or feed bees.
- (2) A person may tamper with a hive or disturb, interfere with or feed bees if the person is:
  - (a) directed by an authorised officer, or
  - (b) undertaking a surveillance action.

## **18 Destruction of bees and hives [s 50, s 51(l), s 55(l), s 91(1)(a), s 122(1)(a)]**

- (1) A person must make the bees and any hive of which they have care, custody or control available for destruction and removal by an authorised officer for the purposes of disposal and eradication.
- (2) An authorised officer is authorised to destroy the bees and a hive by:
  - (a) euthanising the bees,
  - (b) making the dead hive bee-proof,
  - (c) cleaning the location of the hive at the premises to remove the dead bees and any apiary products,
  - (d) burning or destroying the hive at the premises or at other premises for burning or destruction at another location, and
  - (e) any other destruction, disposal or eradication functions necessary to eradicate all hosts of Varroa mite and to prevent the survival of undetected hosts within the emergency zone.

## **19 Fipronil Baiting [s 50, s 51(e), (l), s 91(1)(a), s 122(1)(a)]**

- (1) An authorised officer may place fipronil baits on any premises in the Varroa mite eradication zone.
- (2) The fipronil baits must be used in accordance with all Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority label directions and permit conditions.

**Note:** Access to residential premises for the purpose of this measure is governed by the Act.

## **Part 4 Emergency Measures – Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone**

### **20 Persons or class of persons to whom the measures in this Part apply [s 45(d)]**

- (1) All persons in charge of bees, hives, apiary equipment or premises in the Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone must comply with and implement the emergency measures specified in this Part.
- (2) If this Part specifies that another person or class of persons must comply with and implement an emergency measure, then the measure applies to that person or class of person.

### **21 Notification of bees [s 50, s 51(a)]**

- (1) A person in charge of any bees must notify the Department of the location of those bees.
- (2) A person in charge of premises who becomes aware of a colony of feral bees which is located on the premises must notify the Department of the location of that colony.
- (3) A person who becomes aware of, or suspects the presence of, a colony of feral bees because of any consultation or other professional work carried out at premises must notify the Department of the location of that colony.
- (4) Notifications under this clause must be made:
  - (a) by telephone, to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881, or
  - (b) by electronic transmission, using a form at the location [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa).

**Note:** Section 30 of the Act imposes a biosecurity duty on the owner or person in charge of an animal or thing to immediately notify the Department if the person suspects the presence of prohibited matter in the State.

Notifications may be made by telephone to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

### **22 Prohibitions on movement [s 50, s 51(c)]**

A person must not move apiary equipment into or out of the Varroa mite surveillance emergency zone, unless the person is undertaking a surveillance action and the bees remain on the same premises.

### **23 Fipronil Baiting [s 50, s 51(e), (l), s 91(1)(a), s 122(1)(a)]**

- (1) An authorised officer may place fipronil baits on any premises in the Varroa mite surveillance zone.
- (2) The fipronil baits must be used in accordance with all Australian Pesticides and Veterinary Medicines Authority label directions and permit conditions.

**Note:** Access to residential premises for the purpose of this measure is governed by the Act.

## **24 Moving of honey supers and extraction of honey [s 50, s 51(a), s 51 (c)]**

- (1) A person may move a honey super to an enclosed space for the purpose of extracting honey that is an apiary product.
- (2) The person must move the honey super to premises within the same emergency zone and cannot enter a different emergency zone when moving the supers.
- (3) Before moving the honey super, the person:
  - (a) must close the honey super so that no bees can enter and must ensure that the honey super remains closed until it reaches the enclosed space, and
  - (b) must take all practicable measures to clear bees from the honey super before loading the honey supers onto a vehicle for transport.
- (4) The person transporting the honey super to the enclosed space must transport the honey super by the most direct route and cannot transport honey supers from more than one premises at a time.
- (5) After transporting the honey super, the person responsible for the transport must:
  - (a) decontaminate the vehicle that was used to transport the honey super and any apiary equipment by scraping and cleaning any hive material that has leaked from the honey super or apiary equipment and place that material into disposable garbage bag, and
  - (b) take all reasonable measures to ensure that the vehicle and any clothing is free from bees before leaving the premises to which the honey super was transported.
- (6) If a honey super had no contact with bees in the 21 days after the honey extraction is completed, the person may move the honey super to premises within the same emergency zone.

**Note:** Clause 13 of the Biosecurity Regulation 2017 requires a person to ensure that any hive or other apiary equipment owned or operated by the person is protected so that a bee from another hive cannot take any honey that is in or on that hive or apiary equipment.

## **Part 5 Emergency Measures – Varroa mite notification emergency zone**

### **25 Persons or class of persons to whom the measures in this Part apply [s 45(d)]**

- (1) All persons in charge of bees, hives or premises in the Varroa mite notification emergency zone must comply with and implement the emergency measures specified in this Part.
- (2) If this Part specifies that another person or class of persons must comply with and implement an emergency measure, then the measure applies to that person or class of person.

### **26 Notification of bees [s 50, s 51(a)]**

- (1) A person in charge of any bees must notify the Department of the location of those bees.

- (2) A person in charge of premises who becomes aware of a colony of feral bees which is located on the premises must notify the Department of the location of that colony.
- (3) A person who becomes aware of, or suspects the presence of, a colony of feral bees because of any consultation or other professional work carried out at premises must notify the Department of the location of that colony.
- (4) Notifications under this clause must be made:
  - (a) by telephone, to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881, or
  - (b) by electronic transmission, using a form at the location [www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa](http://www.dpi.nsw.gov.au/varroa).

**Note:** Section 30 of the Act imposes a biosecurity duty on the owner or person in charge of an animal or thing to immediately notify the Department if the person suspects the presence of prohibited matter in the State.

Notifications may be made by telephone to the Exotic Plant Pest Hotline 1800 084 881.

## **27 Moving of honey supers and extraction of honey [s 50, s 51(a), s 51 (c)]**

- (1) A person may move a honey super to an enclosed space for the purpose of extracting honey that is an apiary product.
- (2) The person must move the honey super to premises within the same emergency zone and cannot enter a different emergency zone when moving the supers.
- (3) Before moving the honey super, the person:
  - (a) must close the honey super so that no bees can enter and must ensure that the honey super remains closed until it reaches the enclosed space, and
  - (b) must take all practicable measures to clear bees from the honey super before loading the honey supers onto a vehicle for transport.
- (4) The person transporting the honey super to the enclosed space must transport the honey super by the most direct route and cannot transport honey supers from more than one premises at a time.
- (5) After transporting the honey super, the person responsible for the transport must:
  - (a) decontaminate the vehicle that was used to transport the honey super and any apiary equipment by scraping and cleaning any hive material that has leaked from the honey super or apiary equipment and place that material into disposable garbage bag, and
  - (b) take all reasonable measures to ensure that the vehicle and any clothing is free from bees before leaving the premises to which the honey super was transported.
- (6) If a honey super had no contact with bees in the 21 days after the honey extraction is completed, the person may move the honey super to premises within the same emergency zone.

**Note:** Clause 13 of the Biosecurity Regulation 2017 requires a person to ensure that any hive or other apiary equipment owned or operated by the person is protected so that a bee from another hive cannot take any honey that is in or on that hive or apiary equipment.

## **Part 5 Emergency Measures – Varroa mite general emergency zone**

### **28 Persons or class of persons to whom the measures in this Part apply [s 45(d)]**

- (1) All persons in charge of bees, hives, apiary equipment or premises in the Varroa mite general emergency zone must comply with and implement the emergency measures specified in this Part.
- (2) If this Part specifies that another person or class of persons must comply with and implement an emergency measure, then the measure applies to that person or class of person.

### **29 Moving of honey supers and extraction of honey [s 50, s 51(a), s 51 (c)]**

- (1) A person may move a honey super to an enclosed space for the purpose of extracting honey that is an apiary product.
- (2) The person must move the honey super to premises within the same emergency zone and cannot enter a different emergency zone when moving the supers.
- (3) Before moving the honey super, the person:
  - (a) must close the honey super so that no bees can enter and must ensure that the honey super remains closed until it reaches the enclosed space, and
  - (b) must take all practicable measures to clear bees from the honey super before loading the honey supers onto a vehicle for transport.
- (4) The person transporting the honey super to the enclosed space must transport the honey super by the most direct route and cannot transport honey supers from more than one premises at a time.
- (5) After transporting the honey super, the person responsible for the transport must:
  - (a) decontaminate the vehicle that was used to transport the honey super and any apiary equipment by scraping and cleaning any hive material that has leaked from the honey super or apiary equipment and place that material into disposable garbage bag, and
  - (b) take all reasonable measures to ensure that the vehicle and any clothing is free from bees before leaving the premises to which the honey super was transported.
- (6) If a honey super had no contact with bees in the 21 days after the honey extraction is completed, the person may move the honey super to premises within the same emergency zone.

**Note:** Clause 13 of the Biosecurity Regulation 2017 requires a person to ensure that any hive or other apiary equipment owned or operated by the person is protected so that a bee from another hive cannot take any honey that is in or on that hive or apiary equipment.

# Schedule 1 – Emergency Zones

