



The Australian Rangeland Society

2013 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Meeting #231
23 May 2013

37 Pioneer Crescent, Bellbowrie, Queensland, 4070

MINUTES

1. Open meeting

The meeting was opened at 5.10 pm (EST).

Present: John Taylor, Carolyn Ireland, Ken Hodgkinson, Larissa Lauder, Graeme Tupper, David Phelps, Peter Marin, Annabel Walsh, Robyn Cowley

2. Apologies

Peter Johnston, Don Burnside, Noelene Duckett, Dionne Walsh, Dana Kelly, Katrina Gepp, Margaret Friedel

3. Minutes of the 2012 Annual General Meeting (Meeting #223)

The 2012 AGM was held on 23 May 2012. John Taylor moved that the minutes be received as a true and accurate record of the meeting. Seconded: Peter Marin, Carried.

There were no items arising from the minutes for discussion.

4. President's Report

The Financial Report on The Australian Rangeland Society – hereafter “the Society” – for the year ended 31 December 2012, incorporating the Directors' Report, the Membership Report and the Publications Report was circulated prior to the meeting.

President John Taylor provided an outline of key issues in the Directors' Report. Ken Hodgkinson, Chair of the Publications Committee and Graeme Tupper, Subscription Manager reported on the Publications and Membership of the Society respectively. The Society's Finance and Audit Officer/Company Secretary, Peter Marin, presented the Financial Report.

The names of directors in office at any time during or since the end of the year are:

- J.A. Taylor (Professor, University of Queensland to June 2012, Age 62)
- C. Ireland (Principal, Ireland Resource Management Pty Ltd, Age 65)
- P.F. Marin (Senior Consultant, MLCS Corporate Pty Ltd, Age 38)

The profit of the Society for the year amounted to \$3,436.

The Society publishes and circulates three newsletters and four journals to the members annually, runs a biennial conference, provides grants to assist members with travel and research, and promotes the advancement of the science and art of using Australia's rangeland resources for all purposes commensurate with their continued sustainability and productivity. There were no significant changes in the nature of these activities in the 2012 Year.

Review of operations

Council met six times by teleconference during 2012, held an Annual General Meeting on 23 May 2012, and a General Meeting as part of the Biennial Conference in Kununurra in September 2012. Five of the teleconferences were scheduled meetings, and one was an 'out of session' meeting to address specific topics. The meeting in September was our only face-to-face meeting since the Bourke Conference in 2010.

A joint Council-Publications Committee meeting was also held in Kununurra in September to discuss the changing composition of our membership, the findings of the survey of members' needs, and strategies to attract and retain members.

The following were members of the ARS Council, and attended () meetings during 2012:

J Taylor (8)	President
C Ireland (8)	Secretary
P Marin (7)	Finance and Audit Officer/Company Secretary
G Tupper (8)	Subscription Manager/General Member,
B Forsyth (7)	General Member
L Lauder (6)	General Member
K Masters (6)	General Member
A Walsh (7)	General Member

Other Council activities during 2012 have included:

- Completing a new 5-year contact with CSIRO Publishing for publication of The Rangeland Journal.
- Reviewing the Guidelines for Travel Grants and Scholarships, with an amended version of the Guidelines will be put to members at the 2013 AGM.
- Investigating Copyright responsibility and obligations regarding the Society's planned commitments to the Global Rangelands Knowledge System.
- Seeking approval from rangeland-based Regional NRM Groups for links to their websites to be included on the ARS website. This initiative, and the Global Rangelands Knowledge System will enhance the accessibility of the Society's and other information on rangelands.
- Holding the AGM on 23 May 2012, with the major agenda items being the Director's and Financial Reports and election of Office Bearers. A motion to change the Articles of Association to accommodate the Website, electronic communication tools, and specifying three Editors was passed at the 2012 AGM.

- Development of a policy and Guidelines on Advertising in ARS Publications by the Publications Committee, which was enhanced and endorsed by Council, and will be published in the Range Management Newsletter.
- Endorsement of a process to identify and select a suitable replacement for Dr Ken Hodgkinson, Chair of the Publications Committee. This has progressed to the point that the successful applicant will be announced in the first half of 2013.
- An e-survey of Member's needs, fees and potential uses of the Society's cash reserves, conducted in May 2012. Fifty-eight members (~20% of the membership) responded. The Biennial conference, The Rangeland Journal and Range Management Newsletter were identified as the most valuable benefits of membership, with web-based information on the rangelands also seen to be important. Members were generally not supportive of using the Society's cash reserves for Council and Director development or sponsorship of other rangeland activities.

In this and a subsequent survey of participants in the 2012 Conference there was strong support for the Society and a recognition that the Society needs to raise the profile of the Rangelands and the Society amongst the Australian population. Some members wanted more emphasis on science but there was also a strong leaning towards greater emphasis on rangeland management and indigenous issues. A report on the findings of the first survey was presented at the Kununurra Conference in September, and a collated report on both surveys will be submitted to the Range Management Newsletter in 2013.

- Following the successful Rangeland Journal Lecture series in 2011, further TRJ Lectures were held in Perth, Kununurra and Adelaide. These were designed to draw attention to research on Australia's rangelands, promote the ARS and The Rangeland Journal, and to introduce the 'new' Editor in Chief of The Rangeland Journal, Prof John Milne, to members. Council would like to express its thanks to members who assisted in the local organization of these events and hosted Prof Milne and his wife on their travels.
- Throughout the year, Council has been informed of the progress of the Kununurra Conference Organizing Committee through the minutes of Organizing Committee meetings and the participation of a Council Member, Ben Forsyth, in the Organizing Committee.
- Almost 200 delegates attended the Society's 17th Biennial Conference. This successful conference had the theme of "*Celebrating diversity: people, place and purpose*". A survey conducted by Council revealed that people came for many reasons, with the most common being the networking and updates on issues, research and 'best practice' in the rangelands. During the Conference, the honor of Fellow of the Australian Rangeland Society was conferred on Dr Ken Hodgkinson and Dr Wal Whalley with acclamation. These awards acknowledged their distinguished service and significant contributions to the art, science and communication of rangeland management and furtherance of the aims and functioning of the Society. A motion from the floor at the General Meeting that another home be sought for the Rangelands Australia educational initiative was unanimously endorsed by the members present.
- Council developed and endorsed the Terms of Reference for a sub-committee, comprising two Council members and four ordinary members, to explore the issues regarding closure of the Rangelands Australia initiative, and to report back to Council.
- In December, Council considered applications for Travel Grants and awarded grants to the following – Tiffany Carroll-Macdonald (University of Technology, Sydney) and Helen King (Australian National University).

In addition to Council, the Society continues to rely heavily on volunteers who fulfill vital roles. These are:

PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

Dr K.C. Hodgkinson	Chair
Professor S. Blake	
Dr D.G. Burnside	
Dr J. Davies	
Dr N. Duckett	Editor of Range Management Newsletter
Professor D.J. Eldridge	
Mr R. Grant	Editor of Society Website
Dr P.W. Johnston	
Dr J. Milne	Editor-in-Chief of The Rangeland Journal
Dr R.D.B. Whalley	

ASSOCIATE EDITORS

Dr A.J. Ash	Australia
Dr B.T. Bestelmeyer	USA
Dr B.D. Cooke	Australia
Professor O.P. Dube	Botswana
A/Professor M.E. Fernández-Giménez	USA
Dr R.B. Hacker	Australia
Professor B. Hubert	France
Professor R. Long	China
Mr N.D. Macleod	Australia
Dr A.J. Pressland	Australia
Dr D. Race	Australia
Dr M. Stafford-Smith	Australia
Dr R.D.B. Whalley	Australia

ADVISORY EDITORS

Dr J.R. Brown	USA
Dr M. Friedel	Australia
Professor I. Gordon	Scotland
Professor J. Huang	China
Professor Z. Nan	China
Professor O. Sala	USA
Professor D. Wang	China
Dr A. Waters-Bayer	The Netherlands
Dr I. Wright	Ethiopia

Publications

The Rangelands Journal

In 2012, 113 manuscripts were received. This is higher than the total number of papers received in 2011 (94). The higher submission rate in 2012 indicates increased confidence / interest in the Journal.

Because of the higher submission rate the number of issues published annually will rise from 4 to 6 beginning 2014. Two of these 6 issues will be Special Issues as in the recent past.

The Journal has a significant web presence on the CSIRO publishing site. Archival back content (all Volumes to date) has been made available to all subscribers. The back content has been downloaded at an increasing rate with the 'most read' papers and Special Issues attracting the highest number of downloads. In 2012 the TRJ web site was well utilised with a continued increase in the number of subscribers accessing the site. Individual papers have been downloaded 31,841 times in 2012 (this is higher than the number of paper downloads recorded for 2011, 27,947), and at a rate of approximately 87 individual papers per day. The most read paper in 2012, with 302 downloads, was "[Australia's rangelands: a future vision](#)" by Guy Fitzhardinge, published in Volume 34 (1) on 29 February 2012.

The ISI Citation Impact Factor is based on a narrow window of citation and is reported in June each year. The Impact Factor for a given year is based on the ratio of citations to papers published in the previous 2 years. **The Citation Impact Factor for 2011 was 1.405**, compared with 1.040 for 2010 and 1.164 for 2009. To date The Rangeland Journal has about 115 citations and 78 papers published which gives an "indicative 2012 impact factor" of about 1.474. This means that the Journal has maintained its strong profile in the research community while consolidating the content to 4 regular issues over the citation periods. The 'indicative 2012' Citation Impact Factor places the Journal in rank 88th out of 134 journals listed in the Ecology category — this rank is an improvement on that achieved in the previous year. The steady rise in the Impact Factor (from 2009 to 2012) is directly related to publication of 'high impact' papers, rigorous reviewing and 'active encouragement' for readers to cite papers. The most cited paper (31 citations) over this 4-year period is "**Climate change impacts on northern Australian rangeland livestock carrying capacity: a review of issues**" by McKeon G. M.; Stone G. S.; Syktus J. I.; et al. published in Volume 31 (1) on 1 March 2009.

Other highlights for the Journal included:

(i) one Research Front was published in 2012. This themed research front (in Volume 34, Issue 4) contained papers from several Grasslands Research Institutes in China and was entitled "**Sustainable Grassland Management in China and Australia**". It comprised 3 papers with David Kemp as the Guest Editor. A second special issue on a similar topic is being negotiated for 2013-2014. These themed Issues have attracted considerable interest from 'rangeland' ecologists worldwide who may not be familiar with the Journal.

(ii) confirmation of new subscription business (one university and one consortia subscription deal); Brazil for **UNICAMP Central - Universidade Estadual de Campinas** and South Africa with the **Agricultural Research Council in South Africa** (multisite access to 10 journals including The Rangeland Journal).

(iii) a new **Commenting Tool** is now live on The Rangeland Journal website. Readers can now create a conversation (about published papers) by leaving comments, joining the debate and discussing the science outcomes of new articles. This new line of communication between authors and the science community will significantly improve engagement of the Journal content.

(iv) The Editor-in-Chief, Dr John Milne, visited Australia in September/October 2012 to promote the Journal at the Biennial Conference in Kununurra and at The Rangeland Journal Lectures held in Perth and Adelaide.

The Society Website

In 2012 work began on scanning the proceedings of Biennial Conferences with the view of electronically publishing all the papers on both the Society website and the Global Rangelands website. Each paper will be available with a copyright and disclaimer statement to protect the Society and the author(s) of each paper. This work will be completed by the end of 2013. Past Newsletters will be scanned and made available in 2014.

The Range Management Newsletter

The Newsletter has been regularly published in both electronic form on the Website and as hard copy to members requiring this. The Editor Dr Noelene Duckett attended the Biennial Conference in Kunnunurra and was able to enlist State representatives to write material for the Newsletter.

Biennial Conference

The biennial conference is a significant event in the Society's calendar and provides the main mechanism for members and guests to interact and exchange ideas about the use and management of Australia's rangelands.

The 2012 conference was attended by 193 people from all Australian States and Territories, and the evaluation of the conference was very positive. A detailed report on the conference planning and organization has been prepared by the Chair of the Organizing Committee, Dr Paul Novelly, and this will be an invaluable guide to the organizers of the next conference.

The President recorded the Society's thanks to the Organizing Committee and the Professional Conference Organizer, Meeting Masters, for a job well done.

Planning is in train for the next conference, to be held in Alice Springs in September 2014.

Membership

Membership of the Society has remained more or less stable at around 350-400 members since 2002.

In December 2012 there were 260 members managed by the Society with CSIRO Publishing managing another 94, giving a total of 351. The corresponding figures for December 2011 were 297 plus 94 (=391), December 2010 were 306 plus 79 (=385), December 2009 were 273 plus 83 (=356), December 2008 were 302 plus 83 (=385), December 2007, 303 plus 84 (=387), December 2006, 351 plus 75 (=426) and for December 2005, 321 plus 61 (=382). This compares with 438 in 2004, 434 in 2003 and 427 in December 2002.

The addition of new members has always fluctuated between conference and non-conference years. There were 44 new members in 2012 (a conference year), 23 new members in 2011 (a non-conference year), 84 new members in 2010 (a conference year), 19 new members in 2009, 70 new members in 2008 (a conference year), 23 new members in 2007, 41 new members in 2006 (a conference year) and 30 new members in 2005. However, the trend in new memberships is negated by losses through retirements, and an increased number of non-renewals, in spite of rigorous efforts by the Subscription Manager to encourage all members to renew.

Council supports a presence at major international range-related events in an effort to grow the membership, but this has not resulted in an increased overseas membership.

The majority (95%) of members and subscribers come from Australia, with 51% of members coming from Queensland and New South Wales. There were 14 international members, compared to 13 at the same time in 2011, 23 in 2010, 20 in 2009, 15 in 2008 and 7 in 2007.

The membership figures include five ARS Fellows and nineteen “ex-officio” non-paying members such as the ARS archive, the National Library of Australia, and Associate Editors for *The Rangeland Journal*. It is also noted that the Society has about 31 landholder addresses amongst its members.

Subscription rates for those subscribers managed by the Society remained unchanged for 2012 (\$100 for Full Members resident in Australia). However, for members wishing to receive a printed copy of the Range Management Newsletter an additional \$15 is payable, plus a “late” fee of \$15 is added to the subscription for continuing members who fail to renew by 31st March.

In addition to publishing *The Rangeland Journal*, CSIRO Publishing manages subscriptions for the Society’s “Library” subscribers as well as some of its “Institutional / Corporate” subscribers. Mailing labels were prepared for 94 CSIRO subscribers for the last Newsletter of 2012.

5. Financial Report

The financial affairs of the Society remain on a strong footing with a profit from ordinary activities of \$3,436 (2011: loss of \$64,742) and total equity/accumulated surplus of \$221,118 (2011:\$217,682).

The Society’s total equity is \$221,118 which is considered adequate to cover any liabilities.

The Society continued to work on improvements to programs and protocols to allow it to complete its commitments to standard reporting of its financial position as required under law

John Taylor moved that the Directors’ Report and Financial Report for the year ending 31 December 2012 be accepted. Seconded: Carolyn Ireland. Carried.

6. Elections for office bearers of the Society

Section 16 of the Articles of Association of the Society provide for elections in each alternate year beginning in 1983 commencing at the end of the next Annual General Meeting. Positions are held for 4 years. The officers of the Society are President, Finance and Audit Officer, Secretary and up to five General Council Members. Accordingly nominations were called for three of these positions for a term of four years as set out in the Articles.

President	John Taylor – continuing Member
Secretary	Carolyn Ireland – nominated as Secretary
Finance and Audit Officer	Peter Marin – continuing Member
General Council Members	Annabel Walsh – continuing Member
	Graeme Tupper – continuing Member
	Ben Forsyth – continuing Member
	Kate Masters – nominated as a General Member
	David Phelps – nominated as a General Member

In the absence of any other nominations the President declared that Carolyn Ireland be accepted as Secretary and Kate Masters and David Phelps as General Members of Council. He also expressed his thanks to Larissa Lauder for her enthusiasm and hard work as a Council Member.

7. Motions on notice

Motion 1

Solvency resolution

'That the Directors have reason to believe that the Australian Rangeland Society Ltd will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.'

Moved: John Taylor, Seconded: Ken Hodgkinson, Carried.

Motion 2

Alterations to the Guidelines of the ARS Travel Grant and Scholarship

Section 15 of the current Guidelines of the Travel Grant and Section 16 of the current Guidelines of the Scholarship state that the Guidelines may be altered by a majority vote at a special general meeting or an Annual General Meeting after notice has been duly served.

Proposed changes to the Guidelines were published as a separate document in the Range Management Newsletter and on the website. Council of the Australian Rangeland Society (the Society) recommends that changes be made to the Guidelines of the Travel Grant and Scholarship to allow the following:

- Restrict the Travel Grant and Scholarship to Members of the Society who have been financial Members for at least 12 months.
- Increase the amount to funds available in each year from \$2000 to \$6000

Carolyn Ireland moved that the alterations to the Articles of Association outlined above be adopted.

Seconded: John Taylor, Carried

8. General business

There was no general business.

9. Close meeting

The President closed the meeting at 5.46 pm (EST).

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