



The Australian Rangeland Society

2010 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Meeting #206

20 May 2010

Department of Primary Industries and Fisheries, Yeerongpilly, Queensland

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Open meeting

The meeting was opened at 5.05 pm (EST).

Present were Peter Johnston, Carolyn Ireland, John Taylor, Peter Marin, Kate Masters, Richard Silcock, Sandra Van Vreeswyk, and Annabel Walsh. Dennis Barber towards the end of the meeting.

2. Apologies

Graeme Tupper, Margaret Friedel, Tony Pressland and Ken Hodgkinson

3. Minutes of the 2009 Annual General Meeting (Meeting #200)

The 2009 AGM was held on 19 May 2009. Peter Johnston moved that the minutes be received as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting. Seconded: John Taylor. Carried.

There were no items arising from the meeting for discussion.

4. Directors' Report

The Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2009, incorporating the Directors' Report, the Membership Report and the Publications Report was circulated prior to the meeting (attached).

Peter Johnston provided an outline of key issues in the Directors' Report (these are summarised as dot points on page 1 of the report). 2009 was a quiet but productive year for the Society. In summary, the main activities were:

- Launching on 2 October 2009 the Society's new and improved website developed by the firm Link Web Services under the careful direction of Ken Hodgkinson; Peter commended Ken and the builders of the site.
- Increasing the number of journals published from three to four per year. This included two special issues;
- Publication and distribution of three issues of the *Range Management Newsletter* (March, July and November 2009), this is now online;
- Administering a small Murray-Darling Basin Authority project focused on the integration of current knowledge of the management of riverine landscapes;

- Commence planning for the 16th biennial conference for the Society to be held in Bourke NSW in September 2010;
- Awarding one travel grant to the value of \$1,600 to Mr Neil MacLeod to travel to Botswana in February 2010 to participate in the International Pulse Flooded Wetlands Conference; and,
- Continuing the contract with CSIRO publishing for publication of the Society's journal for the three years 2008, 2009 and 2010 (Volumes 30, 31 and 32).

Publications Report

The publishing and circulation of professional and highly regarded publications in the form of three newsletters and four journals per year to members continued under the guidance of the Publications Committee and their respective Editors and Associate Editors.

In 2009, the Society was mid-way in its second three year agreement with CSIRO Publishing to have *The Rangeland Journal* (TRJ) published both electronically and in hard-copy for the years 2008 - 2010 (Volumes 30, 31 and 32). The TRJ continued to be made available in hard copy and electronic form to members in categories other than Libraries and kindred institutions. The latter two may receive TRJ in electronic form only, or, at a higher subscription, electronic form plus print. The *Range Management Newsletter* continues to be published in hard copy form and has recently commenced in electronic form via the Society's new website. CSIRO publishing specifically promoted TRJ at six conferences in 2009 and in various mail-outs and inserts as part of their regular renewal campaigns.

Although the cost of electronic publication is greater than that by conventional means, Council is still of the opinion that this change was necessary if the Society is to persist as a vital body capable of providing impartial advice and opinion for policy makers and the community generally on rangelands and their use. It is pleasing to note the number of papers submitted to TRJ continues to increase following the publication of the first Issue by CSIRO Publications in 2005. In 2009, 86 manuscripts were received (44% from Australia). This is significantly higher than the total number of papers received in 2008 (75). This higher submission rate in 2009 indicates increased confidence / interest in the journal.

The Journal has a significant web presence on the CSIRO publishing site. Archival back content (Volumes 1-30 (1976-2008)) 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 2009 the TRJ web site was well utilised with a continued increase in the number of subscribers accessing the site. Individual TRJ papers have been downloaded 24,208 times in 2009 (this represents a 26% increase over the number of paper downloads recorded for 2008), at a rate of approximately 66 individual papers per day. The most read paper in 2009 with 691 downloads was "*Climate change impacts on northern Australian rangeland livestock carrying capacity: a review of issues*" by G. M. McKeon, G. S. Stone, J. I. Syktus, J. O. Carter, N. R. Flood, D. G. Ahrens, D. N. Bruget, C. R. Chilcott, D. H. Cobon, R. A. Cowley, S. J. Crimp, G. W. Fraser, S. M. Howden, P. W. Johnston, J. G. Ryan, C. J. Stokes and K. A. Day, published in Volume 31 (1) March 2009.

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 2008 was 1.232, compared with 0.545 for 2007. To date TRJ has about 64 citations and 55 papers published which gives an "indicative 2009 impact factor" of about 1.120. This means that the Journal has maintained its strong profile in the research community whilst expanding the content for

2 to 4 issues over the citation periods. The 2008 Citation Impact Factor places the Journal in rank 75 out of 124 journals listed in the Ecology category — this represents significant increase over the previous two years. The improvement in the Impact Factor is directly related to publication of 'high impact' papers, rigorous reviewing and 'active encouragement' for readers to cite papers. (Further figures on publication matters are available from Council in the report from Chris Anderson from CSIRO publishing.)

Other highlights for the journal included two special issues published in 2009. The first (Volume 31, Issue 1) contained selected papers from the 15th Biennial conference held in Charters Towers with Dr Tony Pressland as the guest editor. The theme of the conference and this special issue was "A Climate of Change in Australian Rangelands". The second special issue (Volume 31, Issue 2) focused on developing a better understanding of the nature of livestock-water interactions and was titled "Livestock Water Productivity". The guest editors were Tilahun Amede, Ben Norton and Deborah Bossio with sponsorship from the International Water Management Institute and the International Livestock Research Institute. Special Issues have attracted considerable interest from 'rangeland' ecologists worldwide who may not be familiar with the Journal. Two special issues are also planned for 2010.

On other publication matters, the Society's new website was launched in 2009. The site is a major renewal and was designed to provide both members and the general public with a wider range of information and services. The *Range Management Newsletter* is now available to members in electronic format through the members section of the site. Council would like to thank Jason Batory for his many years of unwavering service in maintaining the old website for the Society.

Council would also like to thank Dr Ken Hodgkinson and the publications committee for driving the changes to the Society's publications. These changes commenced with a major focus on *The Rangeland Journal*. Ken has subsequently focused on the web site which is also now complete and a major communication tool for the Society. Now that the *Range Management Newsletter* is available electronically Ken and Dr Noelene Duckett will focus on how this publication can be improved.

Membership Report

Membership of the Society has declined from a peak of 638 in 1989 but has remained more or less stable since 2002.

In December 2009 there were 273 members managed by the Society with CSIRO Publishing managing another 83, giving a total of 356. The corresponding figures for 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 at the same time in 2004, 434 at the same time in 2003 and 427 at the same time in December 2002.

There were 19 new members in 2009, 70 new members in 2008 (a conference year), 23 new members in 2007, and 41 new members in 2006 (a conference year). There were 30 new members in 2005.

The majority (86%) of members and subscribers come from Australia, with 44% of these coming from Queensland and New South Wales. There are 20 international members (plus 28 international subscribers), compared to 15 at the same time in 2009, and 7 at the same time in 2008.

The membership figures include five ARS Fellows and eleven “ex-officio” non-paying members such as the ARS archive, the National Library of Australia, and international Associate Editors for *The Rangeland Journal*. It is also noted that the Society has about 38 landholder addresses amongst its members.

Subscription rates for those subscribers managed by the Society remained the same for 2009 following the increase for 2006. Council decided to increase the rates from 1st January 2010. On-line membership renewal became available to members through the Society’s new website commencing in 2010.

As well as 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 83 CSIRO subscribers for the last Newsletter of 2009.

Peter Johnston moved that the Directors’ Report for the year ending 31 December 2009 be accepted. Seconded: Richard Silcock. Carried.

5. Financial Report

The financial affairs of the Society remain on a strong footing with a profit from ordinary activities of \$17,952 (2008: profit of \$80,377) and total equity/retained profits of \$315,216 (2008: \$297,264).

Professionally run biennial conferences continue to have a positive impact on the Society’s financial position and Council looks forward to the 2010 conference delivering a surplus for the Society.

The Society’s total equity is \$315,216 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.

Carolyn Ireland moved that the Financial Report for the year ending 31 December 2009 be accepted. Seconded: John Taylor. Carried.

6. Election of Office Bearers

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 four years.

Peter Johnston stepped down from the role of President and has nominated as a General Member

Peter Marin has re-nominated as Finance and Audit Officer

John Taylor has nominated as President

Graeme Tupper has nominated as a General Member

Peter Johnston moved that the above nominations be accepted. Seconded: Sandra Van Vreeswyk. Carried.

7. Motions on notice

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: Richard Silcock. Seconded: Annabel Walsh. Carried.

8. Other motions

Change of Directors

As part of the regular rotation of Council members, the AGM will be asked to formally accept resignations of existing Directors and the Company Secretary and appoint new officers. John Taylor, Carolyn Ireland and Peter Marin have nominated as Directors, John Taylor has nominated as President and Peter Marin has also nominated as Finance and Audit Officer and Company Secretary.

Peter Johnston moved 'That the nominations of John Taylor, Carolyn Ireland and Peter Marin as Directors of The Australian Rangeland Society Ltd be accepted and that the nominations of John Taylor as President and of Peter Marin for Finance and Audit Officer and Company Secretary of the Australian Rangeland Society Ltd be accepted.' Seconded: Sandra Van Vreeswyk. Carried.

9. General business

Another request for advertising has been received. Carolyn to send this on to Ken Hodgkinson for the Publications Committee to develop a concise Policy and Guidelines and a Schedule of Fees for advertising in the RMN. This is to be presented to Council for endorsement. Carolyn to respond, advising that advertising is under review and that the Newsletter Editor will contact him when the policy and fee schedule has been approved by Council.

Sandra Van Vreeswyk outlined a WA proposal for the 2012 Conference. Paul Novelly will Chair the Organising Committee and Sandra will probably be the Secretary. The conference will probably be in Kunnanurra. Sandra to put together a request for seed money for the Conference to be submitted to the next meeting of Council.

John Taylor acknowledged the contribution that Peter Johnston has made over the last four years as President of the Society. He also expressed Council's appreciation of Ken Hodgkinson and the Publications Committee, Wal Whalley and the editorial team of The Rangeland Journal, Noelene Duckett for the RMN, and Darryl Green, Russell Grant and their team for the organization of the Bourke Conference.

As his final task as President, Peter Johnston will send letters to all recipients of Honoraria.

A key item for the July 29 Council Meeting will be consideration of new Fellows of the Society.

10. Close meeting

John Taylor thanked those present for their participation and attendance, and closed the meeting at 5.50 pm (EST).