



The Australian Rangeland Society

Council Meeting No. 258 Minutes

Time: 5.05pm (QLD Time); **Date:** 26th July 2017 by Teleconference

1. **Present:** David Phelps, Don Burnside, Megan Munchenberg, Bob Shepherd, Angus Whyte (departed meeting at 6.10pm), Cathy Waters (joined meeting at 5.50pm) (**Note:**— a quorum of 5 members was present throughout the meeting)

Apologies: Andrew Ash & Dionne Walsh

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** **Motion:** That the minutes of Council Meeting No. 257 on the 29th March 2017 held by teleconference were approved.

Moved: Don Burnside

Seconded: Angus Whyte

Carried

3. **Business arising from the minutes:**

A. ARS Strategic Planning Meeting

- A preliminary strategic planning meeting was held in Brisbane 13th & 14th May for the ARS Executive of David Phelps, Don Burnside & Bob Shepherd with Andrew Ash & John Taylor in attendance on the first morning by invitation.
- Notes were compiled by Bob Shepherd during the meeting, with David & Don to add additional information
- Background data & documents considered at the meeting included:
 - Trends in membership and financial position since 1994
 - The current ARS Council SWOT analysis
 - Member survey results from 2012 ARS conference
 - Strategic plans of other like minded organisations eg Ecological Society Australia, Society of Range Management USA
 - Articles of ARS
 - Tropical Grasslands Society website
 - New contract for publishing The Rangeland Journal
- A list of 5 scenarios was developed as discussion points towards a 5 year plan/vision:
 - The scenario development considered “*What the ARS can do that needs to be done and that other organisations are not currently doing*” as a crucial question
 - Scenarios are to be emailed to ARS Council members initially for input, then to PC members for input. Discussion to be done by email before the Port Augusta Conference.
- A younger Members Forum was proposed to be held on the Monday of the Port Augusta ARS Conference (Don B & Bob S to continue to progress)
- Scenarios with supporting documentation to be sent to all members prior to Port Augusta ARS Conference, with a strategic planning meeting of Council and the Publications Committee to be held the day after the Conference.

B. Port Augusta ARS Conference

- Organising Committee & Publication Committee are meeting monthly
- Papers are slow to come in
- Keynote speakers – two have dropped out, and have been replaced, but still need one more
- Accommodation at the Roxby Centre is filling up fast
- Sponsorship:

- \$41,000 from mostly mining companies plus CSIRO sponsorship
- Still require an additional \$20,000.
- MLA sponsorship not forthcoming as they are sponsoring primarily producer focused events. There was discussion that this potentially calls into question our relevance to the red meat industries of Australia. May need a stronger producer focus at future ARS conferences. David to communicate with Kate Forrest and then Jane Wightman (MLA) about MLA sponsorship.
- Registrations

Conference registrations as at 26 July 2017

Type	Number
Early bird member	49
Early bird non-member	29
Full member	2
Full non-member	5
Accompanying person	11
Day registrations	2
Students	7
Total	105

- 105 registrations (of which 51 are ARS members); this is approx 50% of expected numbers at this stage, but signs are promising for more registrations.
- 30 registrations are being sponsored by the Arid Lands Board (half being producers) to attend the Port Augusta conference (not included in current numbers).
- Southern Gulf NRM (and other Rangelands NRM groups) are providing bursaries/sponsorships for one producer to attend the conference.
- 150 registrations is still a realistic target
- Budget (**see Attachment 1.0 2017 ARS Conference Budget**)
 - 150 registrations is the breakeven point
- Conference Program is sound & conference organisers are doing a professional job
- Advertising/promotion
 - “NRM Jobs” are promoting the event
 - On-line daily newsletters “Beef Central” & “Sheep Central” to be considered (Don to pass this information to the organising committee)
 - All council members to promote the conference
- 2019 ARS Conference
 - Enthusiasm is high from ACT & NSW members for a Canberra conference
 - Ken Hodgkinson has a meeting planned for August in Canberra

C. 2024 IRC

- Increasing support for Australia to host the 2024 IRC
- Need an organising committee in early 2018 to progress the bid
- The general meeting to be held at the conference needs to seek support for the bid
- Adelaide flagged as a possible location.
- The new Adelaide Convention Centre hosted ARS President David Phelps and other agricultural/science related society representatives to visit Adelaide to see and hear about the facilities that are available. The Centre provides support staff for organising committees for international conferences at no cost. Seed funding (loan) is also made available to get conferences off the ground. This was a good networking opportunity. David to write a brief report and circulate to ARS Council members.

D. The Rangeland Journal

- This item is covered in the Publications Committee report, so can now be removed from the agenda

E. International Year of Rangelands & Pastoralists

- International colleagues have been very supportive
- Letter written to Deputy PM and Agriculture & Water Minister Hon. Barnaby Joyce
- Need to engage additional Australian Gov't departments eg Trade & Investment and Environment
- The Australians are to support Kenya which has made a submission to the UN
- Organising committee is Dana Kelly, Beverley Green, Nicole Spiegel, Ron Hacker, John Taylor, Don Burnside and David Phelps.

F. ARS Sponsorship Committee

- Andrew Ash was an apology for this meeting, but had nothing to add at this point in time.

G. WebEx Teleconference Calls

- WebEx being used today (meeting 258) and is working fine
- Resolved that Council continue with this service
- Remove item from the agenda

H. New Fellow of the ARS

- Ron Hacker's fellowship is on the ARS website and will be in the next issue of the Range Management Newsletter. Both Ron & Margaret Friedel will be presented with their Fellowships at the Port Augusta ARS Conference dinner
- Nominations sought for one additional ARS Fellow.
 - After a chance meeting between David and several past "Rangelanders" an additional person was identified as a potential nominee (name not supplied for the Minutes until nomination process is complete)
 - Rules/criteria for fellowships to be checked
 - The following ARS members – Cathy Waters, Don Burnside & Paul Jones (DAF Emerald) to follow-up with information on the person being considered
- Other categories of award for honouring contributions to the ARS to be considered eg an honour board – item to be discussed at the next Council meeting

I. Publications Committee Nominees

- Motion: That Dr Ann Waters-Bayer be endorsed onto the Publications Committee as an Associate Editor of The Rangeland Journal for a three year term.

Moved: Don Burnside **Seconded:** Cathy Waters **Carried**

- Motion: That Dr Jennifer Silcock be endorsed onto the Publications Committee for a three year term.

Moved: Don Burnside **Seconded:** Bob Shepherd **Carried**

J. Report from SRM Conference (John Taylor)

- John will speak at the Port Augusta ARS conference and include any relevant material from the USA that is relevant to strategic planning for the ARS.

4. Correspondence

Inwards Correspondence

08-Apr-17	Email	Peter O'Reagain	Travel report on the 70th SRM conference and study tour to Wyoming/Colorado. Invoice for \$1500 ARS travel grant & associated airfare
12-Apr-17	Email	Mark Stafford-Smith	Australian bit of the International Future Earth
14-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	
15-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	Draft 2016 AGM Annual Report from david Phelps
16-Apr-17	Email	Michael Levy	Draft 2016 AGM & Audit 2016 Annual Report
16-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	Strategic planning meeting in Brisbane

17-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	Abstract for Pt Augusta ARS Conference
19-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	Moved motion accept quote from CSIRO Publishing for publishing TRJ for next 5 years
23-Apr-17	Email	Gus Whyte	R&D needed on grazing systems
27-Apr-17	Email	Michael Levy	Draft financial statements for your review
27-Apr-17	Email	Michael Levy	Request for ARS Council minutes for 2016 audit
26-Jun-17	Email	Ken Hodgkinson	ARS Biennial Conference Canberra 2019 - Meeting 9th August at CSIRO Canberra
30-Jun-17	Email	National Library of Australia	Can now deposit digital publications online using our edeposit system
05-Jul-17	Email	Ken Hodgkinson	Copy of email to NSW & ACT ARS members, Re: ARS Conference in Canberra 2019. Meeting 9th August in Canberra
12-Jul-17	Email	Kate Masters	Lack of MLA sponsorship for Pt Augusta ARS Conference

Outwards Correspondence

13-Apr-17	Email	Noelene Duckett	Peter O'Reagain: Travel report on the 70th SRM conference and study tour to Wyoming/Colorado
14-Apr-17	Email	Mary Vargas	2016 ARS AGM minutes
02-Apr-17		Don Burnside	NSW Members to Ken Hodgkinson for proposed 2019 Canberra Conference
03-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	Minutes & Action Items to Council members
12-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	2016 AGM Minutes to ARS Council
12-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	Janine@FatBeeHive - Transfer of ARS email to Bob Shepherd
13-Apr-17	Email	Noelene Duckett	Peter O'Reagain's report from his trip to the SRM conference and elsewhere in the US. It needs to go in the next RMN.
13-Apr-17	Email	Noelene Duckett	Dr Ahmad - Future Earth Australia - article for RMN
15-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	Draft 2016 AG Annual Report
16-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	To Michael Levy Annual Report & Audit 2016
16-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	To Ron Hacker - separate Merchant Facility for the ARS Conference Bank Account
16-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	Correct date for 2017 AGM Monday 22nd May
19-Apr-17	Email	David Phelps	To ARS Executive Council - CSIRO Publishing to be approved out-of-session motion to publish TRJ for next 5 years
19-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	All ARS Council Members - vote on accepting quote from CSIRO Publishing for publishing TRJ
19-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	All ARS Council Members - quote unanimously accepted quote from CSIRO Publishing for publishing TRJ
27-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	ARS Council meeting minutes for 2016-17
28-Apr-17	Email	Don Burnside	To Michael Levy - Copies of signed annual report & financial statements 2016
29-Apr-17	Email	Carol Ireland	To Camilla Osborn - IRC-IGC Kenya 1st Announcement for Kenya 2020
01-May-17	Email	Don Burnside	To ARS Executive Council members - final copies of ARS annual report & Audited financials - financial position is deteriorating
05-Jun-17	Email	Carol Ireland	To ARS Council members - final 2017 AGM minutes
29-Jun-17	Email	David Phelps	ARS Council members - feedback request for 12 themes for International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (IYRP)
11-Jul-17	Email	Bob Shepherd	To ARS Council members - Notice of July ARS Council meeting
11-Jul-17	Email	Bob Shepherd	Minutes of March 2017 ARS General meeting minutes
12-Jul-17		Don Burnside	To Kate Masters - data on grazier membership & interest in ARS to support MLA sponsorship of Pt Augusta ARS Conference
11-Jul-17	Email	Camilla Osborn	ARS Council meeting minutes for 2016-17 for ARS website

Motion: That the inwards correspondence be received & outwards endorsed (list attached).

Moved: Don Burnside

Seconded: Megan Munchenberg

Carried

5. Business Arising from Correspondence

- Emails to the ARS secretary's address have successfully redirected to Bob Shepherd's home email address
- Peter O'Reagain's report from the 2017 SRM conference in the USA to go into the Range Management Newsletter

6. Reports

6.1 Finance Report

INCOME	Actual Jan 1 to July 22 (GST excl)		Comments
	Ordinary operating	Conference	
Total ARS Membership Income	\$18,986		some 2017 memberships paid before 1 Jan 2017. Total of 2017 memberships = \$20,515. \$4,603 paid in advance for 2018 and 2019 memberships
Total Conference income		\$95,545	\$32,000 sponsorship, \$63,545 registration. Note some sponsorship received before 1 Jan 2017
Journal income (special issues and CSIRO dividends)			Expect to receive \$10,000 for RRR issue, due out before 31 Dec 2017
Copyright Income			
Interest income	\$264		
GST Refund	\$1,259		
Miscellaneous income			
TOTAL INCOME	\$20,509	\$95,545	
EXPENSES			
Bank service charges	\$1,892		mainly related to conference registrations. Need to transfer conference proportion to conference account
Postage and delivery			
Printing and reproduction			
Gifts and donations			
Professional fees	\$1,440		
Software expenses			
Telephone			
Membership management	\$2,800		Includes Subscription Manager 2016 honorarium
Office supplies			
Marketing and promotion (website, travel grants, social media set-up)	\$3,044		includes \$1,500 for website manager 2016 honorarium and \$1,364 for travel grant
Conference expenses		\$27,794	includes \$22,925 to PCO, plus \$474 in merchant fees, and \$385.80 in conference calls

Journal expenses	\$15,545		includes 6 month payment to CSIRO (\$14,545)
Newsletter costs			
Council costs	\$3,091		mainly Chorus Call
Corporate costs	\$47		ASIC fees
Honoraria (Publications Chair, Book keeper)	\$2,500		Ron Hacker - Publications Chair
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$30,358	\$27,794	
PROFIT/ LOSS	-\$3,850	\$67,751	

Balance of Accounts at 23 March 2017

	actual
Operating Cheque Account 8347	\$1,048
Conference Account 8363	\$58,650
Savings Account 8721	\$85,171
Membership Account 3504	\$6,367
Petty cash conference	\$500
Total cash	\$151,735.56
Outstanding accounts receivable and payable	
Income not yet banked	
Current liabilities not yet paid	\$561.00
Tax payable	\$4,075.45
Net assets	\$147,099.11

- As the annual financial turnover of the ARS exceeds the threshold of \$75K, it is a requirement that the society is registered for GST (which we are), therefore we cannot “escape” GST.
- Requested that the cost accounting for the ARS conference be capable of identifying/separating all costs associated with the conference from the general operating costs of the society.

Motion: That the financial report (copy attached) be accepted and accounts passed for payment.

Moved: Don Burnside

Seconded: Cathy Waters

Carried

6.2 Membership Report

As at 22 July 2017

Category	Hardcopy Journal + RMN	E-journal + RMN	RMN only	Total
Paying members	130* (108**)	50* (44**)	29* (27**)	209* (179**)
Complimentary***	5 (5)	29 (29)	0 (0)	34*** (34)
Institutional subscribers****	11	79	0	90
Total	146 (124)	158 (152)	29 (27)	333 (303)

* Total number of members to pay in 2017

** Number already paid in 2017

*** There are 40 complimentary members, but 6 of these have volunteered membership subs for 2017.

**** institutional subscribers are not ARS members and pay subs direct to CSIRO

- Healthier membership over the last 12 months

- Recent membership increases have been prompted by the member's discount on the ARS conference registration.
- Most new memberships are with the e-Range Management Newsletter only, not TRJ subscription
- Of the 179 paid ARS members, 158 have paid for 2017, and 21 have paid for 2017-2019
- 30 past members have failed to renew their membership; therefore it was decided to cease chasing them up
- Retention of members is now a major challenge

Motion: That the membership report be accepted.

Moved: Don Burnside **Seconded:** Megan Munchenberg **Carried**

6.3 Publication Committee Report (see Attachment 2.)

- Contract with CSIRO Publishing is being finalized. Publishing cost for the ARS will reduce by approx \$10,000
- ARS website is working well for new and current members to join and/or renew membership
- Social media is going well
- Standard of English by those authors whose first language is other than English, is a challenge. Discussions to be held with the CSIRO style editor during the annual meeting with CSIRO Publishing.
- Special editions of TRJ:-
 - Need more sponsorship for special editions (\$10,000 per edition) – include this cost in project application budgets as a part of publishing costs
 - Popular with readers
 - High level of citation
 - Ideas for future special editions: Carbon farming; Drought management (David Phelps); Northern development (Andrew Ash).
 - Example of a special edition proposal to be circulated to Council and the PC by Don Burnside.

Motion: That the Publication Committee report (copy attached) be accepted.

Moved: Bob Shepherd **Seconded:** Cathy Waters **Carried**

7. General/New Business:

- Role Statements for Publications Committee Members to be developed and ratified by the 2018 ARS AGM
- Postal address for the ARS conference to be changed to the conference organisers (it was Annabel Walsh's address)

8. Next meeting of Council:

Joint ARS Council and PC meeting 7.30am Friday 29th September (before the Strategic Planning meeting at the Port Augusta conference)

9. Meeting close: 7.10pm

LIST OF ACTIONS:-

- A. Strategic Plan - David & Don to add additional information to Bob's notes which were emailed 21st May 2017)
- B. Strategic Plan Scenarios to be emailed to ARS Council members initially for input, then to PC members for input.

- C.** Strategic Plan Scenarios with supporting documentation to be sent to all members prior to Port Augusta ARS Conference
- D.** Younger Members Forum on the Monday of the Port Augusta ARS Conference (Don B & Bob S to continue to progress)
- E.** On-line daily newsletters "Beef Central" & "Sheep Central" for ARS conference promotion Don to pass this information to the organising committee
- F.** IRC 2024 – form an organising committee in early 2018 to progress the bid
- G.** Adelaide Convention Centre - brief report and circulate to ARS Council members (David to write)
- H.** International Year of Rangelands & Pastoralists - need to engage additional Australian Gov't departments eg Trade & Investment and Environment (Dana Kelly, lead of the Australian sub-committee to progress)
- I.** International Year of Rangelands & Pastoralists – Australian committee to encourage the Australian Government to support the Kenyan submission to the UN
- J.** New ARS Fellow nominee
 - check guidelines (Bob to do)
 - case to be developed using information gathered by Cathy Waters, Don Burnside & Paul Jones
- K.** Other categories of award eg honour board – discuss at next meeting
- L.** Publications Committee - new members Ann Waters-Bayer & Jenny Silcock – letters to be written (Bob to do)
- M.** RMN – Peter O'Reagain's SRM report to go into newsletter (Bob to action)
- N.** Accounts to be capable of delineating ARS conference costs from general ARS expenditure (Don to arrange)
- O.** Discussions to be held with the CSIRO style editor during the annual meeting with CSIRO Publishing about English standards of some authors (David Phelps/Ron Hacker to action)
- P.** Example of a special edition proposal to be circulated to Council and the PC by Don Burnside
- Q.** Role Statements for Publications Committee Members to be developed and ratified by the 2018 ARS AGM (Bob, Don, Ron and David to review current PC role statements for consistency with Council positions)

Attachment 1.0 2017 ARS Conference Budget

ARS Events Budget						
Event:						
Date:	Expected budget			Running actuals		Variance
Income						
Registrations	Rate	#	Total	#	Total	
Early Bird Member	\$ 700.00	50	\$ 35,000.00	42	\$ 29,400.00	\$ (5,600.00)
Early Bird Non-Member	\$ 800.00	50	\$ 40,000.00	23	\$ 18,400.00	\$ (21,600.00)
Full Member	\$ 800.00	30	\$ 24,000.00		\$ -	\$ (24,000.00)
Full Non-Member	\$ 900.00	30	\$ 27,000.00	10	\$ 9,000.00	\$ (18,000.00)
Students	\$ 500.00	10	\$ 5,000.00	4	\$ 2,000.00	\$ (3,000.00)
Field Trip supplement (Roxby Downs)	\$ 100.00	25	\$ 2,500.00	21	\$ 2,100.00	\$ (400.00)
Day Registration (per day)	\$ 300.00	20	\$ 6,000.00	2	\$ 600.00	\$ (5,400.00)
Gala Dinner	\$ 110.00	20	\$ 2,200.00			\$ (2,200.00)
Accompanying	\$ 300.00	10	\$ 3,000.00	10	\$ 3,000.00	\$ -
Complimentary - sponsors/speakers	\$ -	20	\$ -	0	\$ -	\$ -
Other						
Total		265	\$ 144,700.00	112	\$ 64,500.00	\$ (80,200.00)
Sponsorship Sought			\$ 65,000.00			
Platinum			\$ -		\$ -	
Gold			\$ -		\$ -	
Silver			\$ -		\$ -	
Other (refer to table)					\$ 41,200.00	
Total sponsorship confirmed			\$ -		\$ 41,200.00	\$ (23,800.00)
Other			\$ -		\$ -	
Total Income			\$ 209,700.00		\$ 105,700.00	\$ (104,000.00)
Expenses						
<i>Variable</i>						
Catering: lunch, am/pm teas (15+10+10 per day)	\$ 70.00	220	\$ 15,400.00		\$ -	\$ 15,400.00
Mayoral reception	\$ 5,500.00	1	\$ 5,500.00			\$ 5,500.00
Barbecue (25F+10E)	\$ 35.00	210	\$ 7,350.00		\$ -	\$ 7,350.00
Conference dinner (35F+14B+14E)	\$ 63.00	210	\$ 13,230.00		\$ -	\$ 13,230.00
Field Trips (90% participating)	\$ 100.00	187	\$ 18,700.00			\$ 18,700.00
Roxby Downs supplement	\$ 100.00	25	\$ 2,500.00			\$ 2,500.00
Delegate bags, inserts, notepads, USB etc	\$ 45.00	210	\$ 9,450.00		\$ -	\$ 9,450.00
Printing, photocopying etc	\$ 25.00	210	\$ 5,250.00		\$ 302.40	\$ 4,947.60
Total Variable			\$ 77,380.00		\$ 302.40	\$ 77,077.60
<i>Fixed</i>						
Venue hire	\$ 1,200.00	1	\$ 1,200.00		\$ -	\$ 1,200.00
Display services (poster boards, furniture)	\$ 3,500.00	1	\$ 3,500.00			\$ 3,500.00
Online portal: reg, abstracts & attendee app	\$ 4,400.00	1	\$ 4,400.00		\$ 1,317.45	\$ 3,082.55
Audio visual hire	\$ 10,330.00	1	\$ 10,330.00		\$ 2,310.00	\$ 8,020.00
Keynote speaker fees and gifts	\$ 25.00	16	\$ 400.00		\$ -	\$ 400.00
Speaker travel costs	\$ 1,000.00	6	\$ 6,000.00		\$ -	\$ 6,000.00
Volunteer appreciation	\$ 10.00	12	\$ 120.00			\$ 120.00
Shuttle bus - Port Augusta local	\$ 1,400.00	1	\$ 1,400.00			\$ 1,400.00
Graphic design / signage	\$ 3,500.00	1	\$ 3,500.00		\$ 984.75	\$ 2,515.25
Promotion	\$ 3,500.00	1	\$ 3,500.00		\$ -	\$ 3,500.00
Journal Special Edition	\$ 10,000.00	1	\$ 10,000.00		\$ -	\$ 10,000.00
Insurance	\$ 6,000.00	1	\$ 6,000.00			\$ 6,000.00
Security, cleaning, labour hire	\$ 800.00	1	\$ 800.00			\$ 800.00
PCO fees	\$ 57,030.00	1	\$ 57,030.00		\$ 40,000.00	\$ 17,030.00
Merchant Fees & Bank Charges	\$ 3,000.00		\$ 3,000.00		\$ 5.20	\$ 2,994.80
Total Fixed			\$ 111,180.00		\$ 44,617.40	\$ 66,562.60
Total Expenses			\$ 188,560.00		\$ 44,919.80	\$ 143,640.20
Surplus before GST liability			\$ 21,140.00		\$ 60,780.20	
Less GST liability			\$ 1,921.82		\$ 5,525.47	
Surplus net of GST			\$ 19,218.18		\$ 55,254.73	

Note: only shaded cells can be changed; F is Food; B is Beverage; E is Entertainment

Attachment 2.0 Publications Committee Minutes (12th July 2017)

The Publications Committee met on 12 July 2017. Matters for Council consideration arising from this meeting, and subsequent developments, are as follows:

1. The Rangeland Journal

The third issue for 2017 was published at the end of June. This issue had fewer pages than usual but overall we have published about 300 pages for the first three issues and are on track for a target of 600 pages per annum. There are 17 papers currently in various stages of review.

Two special issues are scheduled for 2017 – one on climate change responses on the Mongolian Plateau and the other based on papers from the Restore, Regenerate, Revegetate (RRR) conference held in Armidale in February. The Mongolian Special Issue is proving difficult for the Australian Guest Editor, Jocelyn Davies. The standard of the science is sometimes poor, the assessments of Chinese reviewers have sometimes been inadequate, and the standard of English is, as expected, poor. It will not be possible for this Special Issue to be published as Issue 4 for 2017 as originally planned. I expect it will be published as either issue 5 or issue 6, with the RRR issue in the alternative slot. CSIRO Publishing has indicated that they would prefer not to publish two special issues consecutively but this will probably be unavoidable.

The Special Issues planned for 2018 will be on the subjects of 'Transition to Transformation' (based on the proceedings of the Port Augusta conference) and Northern Development (being developed by Andrew Ash, with funding anticipated from either the Office of Northern Development or CSIRO). There are currently no confirmed special issues for 2019. An approach has been received from a Chinese party for an issue based on papers to an international workshop on ecological restoration not but no formal proposal has so far been submitted.

The committee discussed concerns raised by the Chair regarding the sometimes poor standard of the English in the journal, particularly in papers by authors for whom English is a second language, despite the considerable efforts of editors and reviewers. It was resolved that Jenny Foster (Senior Journals Publisher, CSIRO Publishing) would be invited to discuss this issue with the Publications Committee in Port Augusta since it relates in part to the standard of copyediting provided by our publisher.

A sub-committee comprising David Phelps, Don Burnside and myself developed a draft contract for the next publishing period and this has now been subject to two rounds of pro bono legal input from a Perth-based lawyer (a colleague of Don Burnside). I hope that this draft can be forwarded to CSIRO Publishing in the coming week.

2. Range MANAGEMENT Newsletter

The July issue of the RMN is in preparation. It may include (if time permits) an article by Amber Marshall on the reach of the Society's social media presence which frequently goes far beyond the membership. Over 2,000 individuals can be contacted by a specific Facebook post or tweet. The success of our social media activities should be of interest to members.

3. Web site

The web site is working well as a gateway for renewal of memberships and for conference registrations. Most activity is currently confined to the conference page which is managed by the conference Organising Committee (through Lisa Pearson, the Conference Organiser). The major challenges for the Web Site Editor currently are to add more links to the Resources page and to finalise the posting of archival issues of the biennial conference proceedings. This latter project is being undertaken in conjunction with myself and aims to make available papers from all past conferences via the ARS site. In some cases these may be available via a link to the Global Rangelands site but time has so far not permitted a detailed collation of what papers are available and where (following receipt some time ago of scanned copies of several past conferences from the Global Rangelands repository at University of Arizona).

4. Social media

The quarterly report from the Social Media Editor for the period March-May 2017 indicated continuing positive feedback to the society's postings. As noted above some posts achieve wide circulation. The Social Media Editor has attempted to redress what was perceived by the Publications Committee at its

March meeting as an imbalance in posted material in favour biodiversity/conservation themes as opposed to production themes. Material on the latter is being provided particularly by Wright Social. This arrangement (whereby Wright Social provide material for one Facebook post per week) continues to work well.

*Ron Hacker
Chair, Publications Committee
22 July 2017*