



The Australian Rangeland Society

General Meeting held at the Port Augusta 2017 ARS Conference

Time: 7.40am (Central Standard Time) **Date:** Thursday 28th Sept 2017

1. **Present:** Ben Forsyth, Paul Novelly, Merri Tohill, John Taylor, Dionne Walsh, Dana Kelly, Darryl Green, Martin Andrew, Ron Hacker, Don Burnside, David Phelps, Bob Shepherd, Margaret Friedel, Greg Campbell, Carolyn Ireland, John Gavin, Andrew Ash, Trevor Ireland, Peter Conradie, George Wilson, Larissa Lauder, Mike Chuk, Mark Stafford-Smith, Gus Whyte, Cathy Waters, Bruce Alchin, Russell Grant, Paul Jones, Graciela Metternicht

Apologies: Don Blesing, Noelene Duckett, Julia Harris, Graeme Tupper

2. **Business arising from the minutes:** (minutes from general meeting held at Alice Springs ARS Conference not located)
3. **Correspondence** (no correspondence)

4. Reports

4.1 President's Report (David Phelps)

- David thanked Carolyn Ireland and Graham Tupper for their contribution to the ARS as secretary and subscription officer respectively over many years. He also wished Annabel Walsh all the best as she recovers from a serious illness.
- ARS Council meeting attendance

| Name | Meetings attended (including AGM) | Meetings eligible to attend (including AGM) |
|-------------------|-----------------------------------|---|
| David Phelps | 6 | 6 |
| Carol Ireland | 5 | 6 |
| Don Burnside | 6 | 6 |
| Andrew Ash | 4 | 6 |
| Dionne Walsh | 5 | 6 |
| Cathy Waters | 5 | 6 |
| Angus Whyte | 6 | 6 |
| Megan Munchenberg | 4 | 6 |

- Council highlights
 - Strategic planning which will continue on Friday after the ARS Conference
 - ARS core objectives are still relevant:-
 - Conduct a biennial conference
 - Publish The Rangeland Journal
 - Provide members with the opportunity to obtain study awards and travel grants (4 in the last 12 months)
 - Interchange of ideas via social media and an on-line presence
 - Promote the science, conservation and art of Australia's rangeland management
 - Ascertain ARS members needs by survey and other means
 - The ARS website has been revamped thanks to the Publications Committee
 - The Rangeland Management Newsletter is now on the website
 - Review of membership subscription rates including multi-year subscriptions

- IRC in Saskatoon Canada:-
 - Promoted the ARS and Port Augusta ARS Conference
 - Presented 8 students with ARS membership
 - Bid for IRC in Australia in 2024
 - Australian members of the IRC Continuing Committee – David Phelps & Dana Kelly; Dana is the Chair of the Continuing Committee
- *The Rangeland Journal* – requires new associate editors
- Questions to David:-
 - Q** How many Australians are members of the Society for Range Management (SRM)?
 - A** Not known.
 - Q** How could SRM/ARS linkages be established eg joint membership?
 - A** Would require an MOU.

4.2 Membership Report (Don Burnside)

- Don informed the meeting that the previous Membership Director, Annabel Walsh was making a slow recovery from her stroke.
- Current membership details are:-

| 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

- Institutional members will increase these numbers eg through the new CSIRO contract
- Registrations for the Port Augusta Conference encouraged an increase in new members
- Demographics of members is not known
- Demographic information will be added to the membership forms in future

4.3 Financial Report

- Financial & membership data is shown below:-

| Year | Member-ship | Assets \$ | Revenue \$ | Surplus/ (loss) \$ | Conferences Surplus (loss) \$ |
|--------|-------------|-----------|------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1996* | 573 | 117,592 | 36,205 | (14,353) | (5,731) |
| 1997 | 538 | 121,093 | 38,374 | 3,501 | |
| 1998* | 450 | 100,829 | 31,417 | (20,264) | (1,746) |
| 1999** | 410 | 88,691 | 30,507 | (12,138) | |
| 2000* | 410 | 79,881 | 33,093 | (8,810) | (5,607) |
| | | | | | |
| 2005 | 321 | 163,228 | 25,902 | (25,911) | |
| 2006* | 351 | 218,437 | 254,034 | 55,209 | 55,561 |
| 2007 | 303 | 216,887 | 39,924 | (1,550) | |
| 2008* | 302 | 297,264 | 262,806 | 80,377 | 69,216 |
| 2009 | 273 | 315,216 | 102,540 | 17,592 | |

| | | | | | |
|-------|-----|---------|---------|----------|------------|
| 2010* | 306 | 282,424 | 242,391 | (32,792) | 10,667 |
| 2011 | 297 | 217,682 | 30,986 | (64,742) | |
| 2012* | 260 | 221,118 | 222,875 | 3,436 | (4,377) |
| 2013 | 246 | 200,691 | 44,165 | (20,427) | |
| 2014 | 220 | 157,961 | 66,373 | (42,730) | |
| 2015* | 221 | 125,533 | 223,771 | (32,428) | 1,459 |
| 2016 | 182 | 86,034 | 54,216 | (39,499) | |
| 2017* | 243 | | | | 20,000 est |

* ARS Conference year

** Townsville IRC year

- General trend in ARS finances is downwards
- On-line membership payments in 2016 were a big problem, resulting in a loss of previously current members
- Society costs in a non-ARS Conference year are \$39,000
- Special editions of The Rangeland Journal earn an extra \$10,000 each, with two special editions budgeted each year (each conference is required to publish a special edition based on the proceedings); additional special editions are planned.
- Subscriptions for the e-journal result in an overall reduction in printing costs
- Likely surplus from the 2017 Conference will be approx \$20,000.

5. Next ARS Conference: (Mark Stafford-Smith)

- 2019 ARS conference will be held in Canberra.
- This will be the 20th ARS conference and the first to be held in Canberra
- A preliminary committee is in place
- Focus areas may include:-
 - Policy challenges
 - Temperate rangelands & pastoral activities in the region
 - Supporting international rangeland needs eg ACIAR
 - Encouraging a range of federal government agencies to support rangeland activities
 - Role of women in rangelands
 - Traditional knowledge
 - International year of Rangelands & Pastoralists
- By timing the conference with university holidays, accommodation costs will be reduced and a wider range of venues will be available
- Parliament may be sitting and 2019 could be a federal election year
- The Fenner School (ANU) could be a possible venue
- More youth is needed on the conference organizing committee

6. General/New Business:

6.1 ACRIS (Australian Collaborative Rangelands Information System) – what is its fate? The ARS pursued this in 2015, but could gain no traction.

6.2 IRC 2024 - bids are open to host this congress.

6.3 Port Augusta ARS Conference - Vote of thanks was carried by acclamation to the Port Augusta Organising Committee for holding an excellent conference.

7. Meeting close: 8.25am