



# The Australian Rangeland Society

Council meeting No. 235

## MINUTES

6pm Queensland Time on Tuesday 3 December 2013 via Teleconference –2013

1. **Present:** John Taylor (Chair), Carolyn Ireland, Graeme Tupper, Annabel Walsh, David Phelps, Ben Forsyth  
**Apologies:** Peter Marin
2. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** The Minutes of Council Meeting 234 on Wednesday 4 September by teleconference were approved. Moved: Ben, Seconded: Annabel, Carried.
3. **Business arising from the minutes:**
  - A. Member Survey
    - a. Indigenous involvement – Peter – deferred to next meeting
    - b. Future Farmers – Ben – deferred to next meeting
    - c. Council Governance
      - i. Template/table for capturing Governance training and experience of Council Members has been circulated by John – **Action:** John to check with Peter
      - ii. **Action:** Council Members to scout around for opportunities within their region. David has sent around a flyer for Board Building **Action:** David to keep an eye on NFP Board building opportunities.
      - iii. Suggestion of a one-day Governance Seminar at Alice Springs Conference to be forwarded to the NT Organising Committee. **Action:** John to follow up.
      - iv. Strategic Plan suggestion from David. Have nearly all the background information for a high level strategic plan. **Action:** David offered to put information into a template and circulate. Six or seven pages in total. **Action:** Carolyn to send current Business and Communication Plans to David
  - B. 2015 Conference in Alice Springs – 12 – 16 April 2015
    - a. John reported. Making good progress, now have a timetable, a theme and an active Program Committee. Contracted Meeting Masters as the PCO. Ray Bird has recently visited Alice Springs. Sponsorship in very good hands – work will start in early 2014. Program includes Student Forum, Innovations in communications, Leadership and managing distant relationships, Mining and resource management, Water sharing, Innovation in pastoralism, Cultural connections, Emerging/alternative industries, etc etc. Governance would fit quite nicely. To be held in the Convention Centre at Alice Springs.
    - b. Marg Friedel's request for a guarantee of support for students - \$10,500. Purpose is to engage young people. Council sees this as a really important initiative and also encourages them to seek external support as planned. Students will be contracted to contribute to the RMN. Moved: Carolyn, Seconded: Graeme, Carried. **Action:** John to confirm with Margaret and Peter Conradie.
  - C. Motion re Rangeland Australia – Ben reported the following summary:

In the early stages of addressing the scope of the Sub Committee, it became apparent that a concerned group of busy people had taken on a complex and multi-faceted issue. A

teleconference with guest Professor John Taylor added to the enormity of the task at hand and fairly clearly indicated that the assets at hand for the group would only see an overview developed of the situation, rather than the detailed analysis that some may have been hoping for. It is felt that to make further real progress in influencing the future of this topic would need to see at least one appointed person to pursue the topics at hand on a paid basis. The Sub Committee presented its report on progress to Council while acknowledging that much of the machinations of future developments will be formed behind closed doors. The Sub Committee feel it important to here acknowledge the mountain of work that Professor John Taylor has overseen in creating the Internationally celebrated Rangelands Australia program, which has seen a unique spike in the delivery of tertiary education to the "forgotten" 80% of Australia's land mass. The legacy of the work he has lead will live on in the past students throughout the Australian and International Rangelands. It would also be remiss not to acknowledge the support of UQ in developing and hosting Rangelands Australia for the period it was active and hope that the best outcomes for "the Bush" rise from the dust. Ben thanked the Members of the Sub Committee for volunteering their time in this process. He commended the findings to the ARS Council on behalf of the Sub Committee. Council noted the report.

**Action:** Ben to send report to Council. **Action:** John to make factual corrections to the report and circulate to Council. **Action:** John to write and thank Ben and the Committee.

D. ARS Archive at Middleback Station – Annabel – ARS records have moved to Des Coleman's Office at the Waite Institute. **Action:** Annabel & Carolyn to sort in January-February 2014. Moved: John that \$300 be allocated for safekeeping of the Archive, Seconded: Graeme, Carried.

E. Rangeland Initiative Meeting and outcomes – Peter – deferred to next meeting

F. Succession Planning: Graeme has circulated a list of current members. Carolyn has circulated a list of Council Members for the last 10 years. Need to find people with the skills and commitment to take the Council and Society ahead. Members need Governance training. This will only increase as time goes on. Think about criteria for Council replacements (eg. ability to commit time, passion for and experience of the rangelands) and then talk to the members to assess their qualifications and commitment. Subscriptions Manager could be outsourced? Short article for the newsletter and website would be an excellent start. This discussion dovetails nicely into strategic planning. **Action:** John to draft an article. **Action:** Members of Council to canvass likely people and/or active members. **Action:** Ben to outline his thoughts re: paying for services. **Action:** John to circulate insights on emerging issues and trends of relevance to the ARS.

G. Planning for the SA bid for the September 2016 Conference. Carolyn and Peter have emailed SA Members and others to gauge enthusiasm for setting up a working party for the SA Conference bid. Eight have responded so far (pretty good for a small State) – John Gavin, Jen Cleary, Glen Norris, Carolyn Woods, Don Blesing, Geoff Axford, Kate Forrest and Craig Baulderstone, all with varying degrees of appetite for the task. Our next task is to convene a meeting of all interested parties either here or in Port Augusta to see if we can get a bid off the ground. It seems hopeful so far. However some have noted the clash with IRC in July 2016, coupled with the postponement of the NT Conference until 2015 and have suggested that we delay the SA Conference until 2017 (either April or the usual September). Carolyn agrees with them and seeks Council's approval for a move to April 2017. Moved: Graeme, Seconded: Annabel, Carried. **Action:** Carolyn and Peter to progress this and have a bid up for approval at the Alice Springs Conference in April 2015.

#### 4. **General business:**

##### A. **Membership – Graeme Tupper – noted by Council**

ARS now has 228 active members. Graeme will keep trying to sign up new members and also those who have not renewed this year.

**B. Finance – Peter Marin – noted by Council**

Carolyn reported for Peter and indicated that the current financial position of the Society remains steady. There is \$193,017.16 across all accounts with \$11,764.80 in the everyday account, \$15,294.25 in the conference account and \$165,958.11 in the online saver account. Peter has transferred \$20,000 seed funding to the Alice Springs conference which has made an initial payment of \$4,705.75 for deposit on the Alice Springs Convention Centre. ARS recently received \$10,000 from the MLA for a special issue of TRJ. We have also recently paid around \$12,000 for a another recent Special Issue of TRJ but also are expecting a payment of \$7,000 being returned soon from the Tax Office for an incorrect BAS statement. Discussion followed.

**Action:** Peter to provide a list of ins and outs of finances at every Council meeting.

**C. Publications Committee – Report from the Chair, Ron Hacker – noted by Council**

**a) Committee membership**

The terms of Dr Ken Hodgkinson, Dr Wal Whalley, Dr Peter Johnston and Dr David Eldridge expire on 31 December 2013. Drs Hodgkinson, Whalley and Eldridge have indicated that they are willing to accept appointment for a further term. Dr Johnston does not seek a further appointment due to work pressure. Dr Andrew Ash has indicated that he is prepared to accept an appointment to the Committee and would bring extensive experience in scientific publishing as a research scientist as well as an extensive network of international scientific contacts. A brief CV is attached.

Recommendation:

- Moved Graeme: That Council express its thanks to Dr Peter Johnston for his service on the Publications Committee; Seconded: Carolyn, Carried.
- Moved Ben: That Council extend the appointments of Dr Ken Hodgkinson, Dr Wal Whalley and Dr David Eldridge for a term of three years commencing 1 January 2014. Seconded: John , Carried.
- Moved David: That Council offer Dr Andrew Ash an appointment to the Publications Committee for a three year term commencing 1 January 2014. Seconded: John, Carried.

**Action:** John to inform Ron Hacker of the above decisions

**b) Rangeland Lecture series**

Two Rangeland Lectures have been successfully delivered to date in 2013 – by Dr Joel Brown in Brisbane and Dr Margaret Friedel in Alice Springs. Both these lectures were well attended (about 60 in Brisbane and about 100 in Alice Springs). The video recordings of these lectures have not yet been loaded onto the Society's web page.

“To date the preparation, taping and uploading of these lectures, from 2011 to present, has relied on the goodwill of the presenter and other members of the Society or supportive institutions with the required skills. However, the 2013 lecture series has highlighted the unsustainable nature of this arrangement, especially given the very limited pool of media skills on which the Society can draw. If these lectures are to become a feature of the Society's calendar, and an attractive feature of the website, I believe that some funding must be made available to support them – to provide a modest payment for the presenter and the organiser, and to allow for professional recording, editing and uploading. The Alice Springs lecture cost approx. \$800 for recording, editing and uploading and some additional costs were met by Society members out of pocket. No fee was paid to the presenter.”

Recommendation:

- That Council approves the expenditure of \$1200 per lecture for future presentations in the Rangeland Lecture series, authorise the Chair of the Publications Committee to negotiate disbursement of these funds with lecture organisers, and determine an appropriate cap on total annual expenditure. Rejected: Support the idea but requesting

more detail on what the PC has in mind.

**Action:** John to seek more information from the Publications Committee.

**c) Special Issues of *The Rangeland Journal***

The Publication Committee has endorsed in principle a proposal from Professor Shikui Dong, School of Environmental Sciences, Beijing Normal University for a special issue entitled *Enhancing the resilience of coupled human and natural systems of alpine rangelands on Qinghai-Tibetan Plateau*, to be published in 2015. However, the Committee was concerned about some aspects of the proposal related to content and has requested a revised submission for further consideration.

Securing funding for Special Issues is critical to the Society's finances now that it is committed to production of two Special Issues per year. In every second year, one Special Issue will be produced from papers contributed to the Biennial Conference and this may be unfunded unless each conference returns sufficient profit to the Society. Explicit provision for this situation should be considered by the Organising Committees of future conferences.

Recommendation:

- Moved: Carolyn, That Council consider issuing a direction to organising committees of future biennial conferences to consider the need to fund production of a Special Issue of *The Rangeland Journal* in setting the registration fees for the conference. Seconded: Ben, Carried.

**Action:** John to inform Ron Hacker of the above decision

**d) Web site**

The Chair met with the web site Manager Mr Russell Grant on 18 November. It was agreed that the site would benefit from an upgrading to present a more attractive home page and to make the content more readily accessible. A proposal has been circulated to the Publication Committee and its consideration will be reported to future Council meetings. Council noted this report.

**e) Twitter Site**

Twitter Site – Publications Committee were to provide a statement of role, the qualifications of the applicant, expenses that may be incurred, outputs and planned achievements. Council discussed the twitter site and decided to leave this to the Publications Committee. Item closed.

**5. New business:**

- A. Travel Grant Applications – Graeme declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting
- a. Dr Mohammed Abdelkreim (Not eligible – not a financial Member)
  - b. Alois Hlatshwayo (Not eligible – not a financial Member)
  - c. Dr Neil McLeod – application approved – Moved: Annabel, Seconded: Carolyn, Carried. (Neil to be asked to provide insights into the growth of GSSA)
  - d. Graeme and June Tupper – application approved – Moved: Carolyn, Seconded: Ben, Carried.
  - e. Graeme Hand. Annabel declared a conflict of interest and left the meeting – Graeme Tupper rejoined the meeting to enable a quorum – application not approved as it stands, appears to be written in a rush, no clear objectives. **Action:** John to contact referees and Council will deal with it as an Out-of-Session email.
- B. Suggested Meeting Dates for next year
- |                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Meeting No 236       | Wednesday 29 January 2014                             |
| Meeting No 237       | Wednesday 2 April 2014                                |
| Meeting No 238 (AGM) | Wednesday 21 May 2014                                 |
| Meeting No 239       | Wednesday 23 July 2014                                |
| Meeting No 240       | Wednesday 24 September 2014 (John possibly in Africa) |
| Meeting No 241       | Wednesday 3 December 2014                             |

- C. Email received from Don Burnside regarding the way that Ecological Society of Australia (ESA) resources their website - Council noted this email
- D. 2012 Travel Grant Report from Helen King – Council noted this report

## 6. Correspondence

### INCOMING

06-Sep-13	Email	John Gavin	Offering assistance with SA bid for conference
18-Sep-13	Email	Chris Anderson	Response to Annabel Walsh re digitising archives
08-Oct-13	Email	Boyd Wright	Response re enquiry about ARS Awards
16-Oct-13	Email	David Campbell	Tender documents for PCO of Alice Springs Conference
11-Oct-13	Email	Sally Leigo	Re PCO Tender from Meeting Masters
28-Oct-13	Email	Dionne Walsh	Re MLA Special Edition of TRJ
13-Nov-13	Email	Ray Bird	Tanks for appointment as Alice Springs PCO
18-Nov-13	Email	Dr M. Abdelkreim	Application for Travel Grant
19-Nov-13	Email	Alois Hlatshwayo	Application for Travel Grant
19-Nov-13	Email	Don Burnside	ESA resourcing of their website
27-Nov-13	Email	Dr Neil Macleod	Application for Travel Grant
28-Nov-13	Email	Graeme Tupper	Application for Travel Grant
28-Nov-13	Email	Graeme Hand	Application for Travel Grant
2-Dec-13	Email	Margaret Friedel	Funding for student presenters at Conference

### OUTGOING

06-Sep-13	Email	Pieter Conradie	Acceptance of NT Conference Proposal
06-Sep-13	Email	Camilla Osborne	ARS Membership form as part of LEB satchel
06-Sep-13	Email	John Gavin	Thanking John for his offer of assistance
18-Sep-13	Email	Chris Anderson	Request from Annabel Walsh re digitising archives
08-Oct-13	Email	Boyd Wright	Enquiry re eligibility for ARS Awards
11-Oct-13	Email	Sally Leigo	Re PCO Tender from Meeting Masters
28-Oct-13	Email	Dionne Walsh	Response re MLA Special Edition of TRJ
13-Nov-13	Email	Ray Bird	Welcome to Ray Bird as Alice Springs PCO

## 7. Next Meeting

The next Council Meeting will be held by teleconference on Wednesday 29 January 2014 at 6 pm Queensland time.