



The Australian Rangeland Society

MINUTES PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 20 January 2016

5pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time
By Teleconference

Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 5.02 pm.

1. **Present:** Ron Hacker (Chair), Wal Whalley, Ken Hodgkinson, Steve Blake, Don Burnside, Jocelyn Davies, Andrew Ash, Amber Marshall, Camilla Osborn
2. **Apologies:** Noelene Duckett, David Eldridge
3. **Other items of General Business**

Ron Hacker raised two items for later discussion: Organisational chart and waiver of subscriptions.

4. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Motion: That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 18 November 2015, as amended, be accepted.

Moved: Don Burnside

Seconded: Ken Hodgkinson

Carried.

Motion: That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 21 December 2015, as amended, be accepted.

Moved: Don Burnside

Seconded: Wal Whalley

Carried.

5. **Matters arising from previous minutes**

- 5.1 Advisory Editors

Ken Hodgkinson has tried to contact Professor Nan but he hasn't responded. Ken will follow up. Brian Walker has retired and a replacement is being sought. It was agreed that the replacement should be Australian.

Action: Committee members to send possible names to Ron Hacker.

- 5.2 Testimonial for Wright Social

Ron Hacker has prepared a testimonial for Heidi Wright and it was agreed it should be signed by Ron as Chair of the Publications Committee.

Action: Ron Hacker to send the testimonial to Heidi after first checking with David Phelps.

5.3 Link to membership page in Facebook posts

Amber Marshall recommended that there should not be a link to the ARS on every post, only on those posts relevant to the Society. Agreed by all members.

6. Progress report on *The Rangeland Journal*

6.1. Report from A/Editor in Chief

Wal Whalley indicated that Vol 37, Issue 6 has appeared on line, a little later than expected due to transition issues after John Milne's passing. There has been a problem with the print version as the printing company in India was affected badly by floods. There isn't yet an indication of when it will be printed. Vol 38, Issue 1 (Special Issue on the Australian Feral Camel Management Project) is running a bit behind in terms of papers. Three papers are accepted and four or five only require minor revision. Others are in the final stages of review/preparation. Five papers have so far been accepted for a normal issue but more would be required if we pushed the Special Issue back to Issue 2. The PC recommended proceeding with the Special Issue as the first issue for Volume 38 and accepted that it will be a little late. The following issue will then be on time. Wal Whalley and Steve Blake will encourage authors for the Special Issue to return their revisions quickly.

Wal has been in contact with Paul Novelly and he will visit Armidale in the week commencing 15 February to work through the hand-over process. Paul will commence formally on March 1st.

6.2 Appointment of Editor in Chief

David Phelps has prepared the official letter of invitation to Paul Novelly which was to be sent today. Unsuccessful candidates will be advised after Paul has formally accepted the offer. CSIRO Publishing has offered to participate in the transition, attending the discussion in Armidale either in person or for part of it by Skype or teleconference.

Action: Wal Whalley to advise CSIRO Publishing of the meeting date.

6.3 Special issues

6.3.1 State of knowledge of Australian rangelands

Andrew Ash advised that he has not advanced this far but would distribute out-of-session a one page proposal.

6.3.2 Mongolian steppe ecosystem

The agreement for this Special Issue is close to being finalized. Jocelyn suggested that ScholarOne requires a better process for Guest Editors so that they can see all papers as they progress. Chris Anderson suggested that Jocelyn be appointed as "Australian-based Guest Editor" so that she can access all papers and this is being reflected in the agreement. Last items in the agreement to be finalized include submission date and projected publication date. Wal Whalley provided input on the scheduling process, including the timetables for issues. The Special Issue can be slotted into the timetable with normal issues scheduled around the Special Issue. Jocelyn indicated that submission date would be mid-September 2016, which may line up with Issue 2, 2017. One third of the authors will be from Mongolia or are culturally Mongolian.

Action: Wal Whalley to circulate the 2017 publication timetable to the PC.

6.3.3 Gas Industry Social and Environmental Research Alliance

Jocelyn Davies has been in discussion with Shirley Masterson (communicator for GISERA) and they are working through the practicalities and will get back in the coming weeks. A possible theme would be 'Mining and Energy in northern Australia' There is scope for the Special Issue to be broader than just gas production and could include other aspects of mining.

6.3.4 Vegetation regeneration in the former NW CMA

Wal Whalley advised that the conference will proceed in February 2017. Authors and papers for the conference will be discussed in the next month. Wal has arranged an international keynote speaker who is happy to have the presentation styled as a Rangeland Journal Lecture. Wal Whalley will start to prepare a case (proposal and draft contract) for the Special Issue following the February discussions. The aim would be to publish later in 2017.

With three possible Special Issues now available for 2017 a Special Issue on State of Knowledge of Australian Rangelands would probably not be feasible until 2018.

6.4 Costs of TRJ production

Don Burnside introduced a paper he had prepared on revenue and costs associated with people shifting from hard copy to online issues. The journal consumes 70% of membership income as journal costs are \$13,600 per annum and membership revenue is \$17,100. The PC thanked Don for his clear and well written paper. Members were surprised by the apparently low institutional subscription rate for TRJ compared with other journals produced by CSIRO Publishing. The potential for securing some additional income or cost saving for ARS by working with CSIRO Publishing around subscription rates was discussed.

Action: Don Burnside to follow-up with Chris Anderson about the disparity in online subscription rates between TRJ and other CSIRO publications.

Motion: That the cost of Special Issues should be \$10,000 exclusive of GST.

Moved: Don Burnside

Seconded: Andrew Ash

Carried

6.5 Tender for publication contract

Ron Hacker spoke to the draft Call for Tenders, noting the suggested changes put forward by Andrew Ash and Don Burnside. Don suggested that more background information on the journal, its circulation, issues, subscribers, print runs etc. needs to be provided but this can be done as people respond to an initial call i.e. a two-stage process. A two-stage process was agreed by members of the PC with tenders to be submitted by May 31st and a decision by July 31st.

Action: Ron Hacker to re-draft a call for expressions of interest to be advertised by 28th February indicating tender documents to be submitted by May 31st. A package of supporting information will be prepared by end of February.

7. Range Management Newsletter

Noelene Duckett's written report noted that with the RMN moving to online publication the loading of material on the new web site is straight-forward and that it should take significantly less time to produce each issue. There is now a good opportunity to make the newsletter look more contemporary and interesting.

The last issue (November) was a little late as we waited until Council had approved the new Membership Categories and Rates for 2016. The next newsletter should be out in March.

Noelene raised the potential for better linking content in the RMN to the social media initiative. Amber Marshall suggested that as only members have access to the current issue (in the Members Area of the web site) a targeted approach is needed where snippets of information are provided with links back to the ARS membership page.

Action: Ron Hacker will write to Council requesting that a letter of thanks be sent to Graeme Tupper for his many years of service in managing the printing and distribution of the RMN.

8. ARS web site

8.1 Report from Website Editor (Camilla Osborn)

Camilla had website training on Monday, January 18. Camilla will first update the membership costs to reflect recent changes. There is a short bio on Council members and Camilla asked whether it was needed for PC members as well. It was agreed that profiles for the PC aren't needed on the website. Camilla asked whether people were concerned about email addresses of PC members being on the website. It was agreed that their presence on the website is not a major issue and they can remain.

Ron Hacker indicated that quite a bit of information needs to be uploaded to the new website e.g. past issues of the RMN, proceedings of past biennial conferences, and outstanding minutes of Council and the Publication Committee. Camilla indicated she has the files for the RMN and conference proceedings and will gradually update the website over the next few months

Ron Hacker suggested that we need to have more pictures (with brief captions) available for the slide show. Wal Whalley suggested that the cover of the current issue of TRJ (which includes a picture) could be added to the slide show. It might also be possible to regularly update the TRJ icon on the home page to reflect the current issue.

9. Social Media

9.1. Report from Social Media Editor (Amber Marshall)

Amber Marshall reported that the hand-over from Heidi has been smooth. The number of 'likes' has since grown at about the same rate as before the hand-over. The immediate focus is to bolster activity that points to the ARS website, and in particular to increase the level of networking. This will require input from PC members to provide some useful content to help stimulate networking.

Amber raised the issue of posting on behalf of the ARS in areas which might be politically sensitive e.g. liking a Facebook post of a politician. Ron Hacker indicated that we need to remain apolitical. It was agreed it can be a grey area and good judgement is required and wherever possible an evidence-based approach is desirable.

9.2. Draft policy documents

Ron Hacker had circulated a revised copy of the policy documents prepared by Heidi Wright. It was agreed that these documents are very useful and that they be accepted as working documents for guidance of the Social Media Editor and the Publications Committee. The proposed agreement with the Social Media Editor (included in the 'Social Media Policy and Guidelines' document) was considered unnecessary as its intent is covered by the Role Statement for the Social Media Editor.

Action: Ron Hacker will bring the three documents together as a single document with Don Burnside to provide some further input.

10. General business

10.1 Organizational Chart

Ron Hacker indicated that this was requested by David Phelps but it was difficult to put together because of the flat nature of the ARS structure. Wal Whalley indicated that the organizational chart raised issues of the lines of communication in the journal publication process, particularly with special issues. With the sudden passing of John Milne, there wasn't a lot written down on Special issues.

Action: Ron Hacker to write a protocol for production of Special Issues.

10.2 Subscription waiver

The new subscription system on the web is not “aware” of subscription waivers provided to certain office bearers. Don indicated that the first step is to determine who is entitled to subscription waivers.

Action: Ron Hacker to write to Council providing a recommendation on who is eligible for subscription waivers.

Action: Camilla Osborn to contact Fat Beehive to seek access to the Members area for Camilla Osborn, Amber Marshall and Ron Hacker.

11. Date of 2016 meetings

The following dates for PC meetings are:

- 16 March
- 11 May (before AGM)
- 13 July
- 14 September (RBH overseas)
- 23 November

The meeting closed at 7.03pm.