



The Australian Rangeland Society

MINUTES PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 13 July 2016

6.00 pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time
By Teleconference

Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 6.03 pm.

1. **Present:** Ron Hacker (Chair), Andrew Ash, Wal Whalley, Paul Novelly, Jocelyn Davies, David Eldridge, Noelene Duckett, Amber Marshall, Camilla Osborn
2. **Apologies:** Ken Hodgkinson, Don Burnside

3. Website Editor's report

Due to time constraints Camilla Osborn presented her report as the opening agenda item. She apologised that updates to the web site had been delayed in recent months due to personal circumstances. She also noted some difficulty in responding to requests from a number of different sources and requested that in future there be one point of contact for web site amendments. The PC agreed that in future the Chair of PC would be the single point of contact and that all requests for changes to the web site will be directed through him.

Action: Ron Hacker to advise Council that in future requests for changes to the web site should be channeled through the Chair of PC.

Camilla noted that she had been in contact with Melissa Pearson from the biennial conference Organising Committee and was proposing to register a new domain name for a conference web site. Ron Hacker emphasized that the ARS web site is to be the conference web site and that the 'Biennial Conference' tab on the home page is intended to be the location for all information relevant to conferences in future. This was specifically included in the web site redesign project. The payment facilities available through the site should be capable of accepting registrations for the conference. Some discussion with Fat Beehive (and possibly Don Burnside) will be required to ensure that these operate to the satisfaction of the Organising Committee.

It was noted that specific issues that require attention include uploading of

- Past issues of Range Management Newsletter;
- Past proceedings of Biennial Conferences;
- Council and PC minutes;
- Journal abstracts for the current issue.

Wal Whalley will prepare the abstracts from the current issue of the journal and provide them to Camilla via Ron Hacker. Camilla indicated that she was intending to devote an hour a week to the web site when she is able to establish this routine. However Ron Hacker noted that more time than this would be required initially to deal with the backlog.

Jocelyn Davies asked if an email alert could be sent to members when new Abstracts are posted. This could be done in the same way as is done currently for the RMN.

Action: Noelene Duckett and Camilla Osborn to liaise to establish an email alert for new journal abstracts when posted on the web site.

4. **Other items of General Business**

No additional items

5. **Minutes of the Previous Meeting**

Motion: That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 16 March 2016, as amended, be accepted.

Moved: Wal Whalley

Seconded: Jocelyn Davies

Carried

Motion: That the minutes of the special meeting of the Publications Committee held by teleconference on 27 April 2016, as amended, be accepted.

Moved: Paul Novelly

Seconded: Andrew Ash

Carried

6. **Matters arising from previous minutes** (not listed as specific agenda items)

Meeting of 16 March 2016

Don Burnside had advised by email that the issue of on-line subscription rates for TRJ need not be taken further at this stage. CSIRO Publishing have advised, in a series of emails involving Don, Ron Hacker and David Phelps, that rates for TRJ on a per page basis are comparable to other journals and that price increases >5% would be viewed very unfavorably by libraries.

Meeting of 27 April 2016

No matters arising

7. **The Rangeland Journal**

Report from Editor-in-Chief

Paul Novelly reported that three issues have so far been published this year (including two special issues) and that papers for issue 4, which will run to 93-95 pages have been finalised; publication will occur on schedule in early August.

Papers are continuing to be received at a reasonable rate, and the rejection rate remains steady at about 50%.

There is still a need for additional Associate Editors (AE) and this will continue if the scope of the journal expands (as well as in response to the volume of submissions). Although authors are required to nominate reviewers there is a need for AE who are familiar with the field so that we can be sure of the standard of reviews obtained. David Phelps and Don Burnside will be on the lookout for potential AE at the IRC this month.

Ron Hacker advised, in response to a question from Paul, that much of the preparation that was done early in the year in anticipation of a call for tenders for a new publishing contract to commence in December 2016 will be relevant to the call for tenders to be issued now in November 2016, to commence December 2017. This material needs to be reviewed in the near future to ensure we can proceed to tender in November.

Paul raised the issue of 'key words' required by ScholarOne at the time manuscripts are submitted. This follows contact from an author who had found the list of available key words particularly restrictive. Jocelyn Davies concurred that the list is restrictive, particularly for papers from the

social sciences and questioned the need for such a list at all. Wal Whalley pointed out that the key words that appear in the published paper are 'Additional key words' selected by the author. In discussion the PC come to the view that retention of a key word list in Scholar One was not necessary. The PC resolved that Paul Novelly should contact CSIRO Publishing to determine if the key word list needs to be retained; if so he is at liberty to add additional key words as he sees fit.

Action: Paul Novelly to contact Jenny Foster to determine if the key words list needs to be retained in ScholarOne.

Special Issues

Jocelyn Davies reported that preliminary editing of papers for the Mongolian Plateau SI was proving very difficult, that the rationale for the work reported was often poorly articulated and that the standard of the science and data analysis was often inadequate. Progress is being made but the original deadline for submission may have to be extended.

Ron Hacker noted that payment for this special issue has already been received.

The draft contract for the SI 'Restore, Regenerate, Revegetate', scheduled for publication in the second half of 2018, is currently with University of New England for review.

An email had been received from Steve Bray in appreciation of the efforts of all concerned to produce the SI on climate clever beef.

8. Range Management Newsletter

Noelene Duckett reported that preparation of the next RMN is continuing without any major issues. She anticipates that it will contain reports from ARS travel grant recipients who attended the IRC; publication will thus be delayed until August to enable these individuals to submit their reports.

Amber Marshall commented on the need to distribute 'teasers' from the RMN via social media to encourage visits to the web site. Amber and Noelene will liaise to ensure that this occurs.

Action: Noelene Duckett and Amber Marshall to liaise to distribute 'teasers' from the RMN via social media.

9. Social Media

Amber Marshall spoke to her report (attached) which had been distributed prior to the meeting. She noted the increasing contribution being made by PC and Council members (particularly, recently, David Phelps and Carol Ireland) to the material available for posting and reiterated the importance of members providing material of general interest from their activities.

Amber advised that the time commitment involved in maintaining the social media accounts is not currently excessive but could become so when she returns to full time work. However, by then she should have the Hootsuite program operating which will automate postings and simplify the reporting process.

The PC congratulated Amber on her report and the continued professional management of the social media accounts.

10. General business

Ron Hacker advised that Council has foreshadowed a membership drive in 2016 in which the web site and social media accounts are expected to play a significant role. No specific directions regarding the format for this program have yet been provided by Council but the issue has nevertheless been listed for discussion by the PC. Points raised during this discussion were:

- Facebook followers who forward ARS posts to friends could enter a draw for free registration at the 2017 conference, in the expectation that a proportion of those to whom the posts are forwarded would visit the web site and join the ARS (Amber Marshall);
- What are the benefits of membership given that most of the information available from the ARS is freely available from the web site; defining the benefits of membership must be the

key to any membership drive (Paul Novelly). If this is so then a membership drive may be essentially a branding exercise (Amber Marshall);

- Increasing membership may be more about the social sustainability of the ARS than the immediate financial position (Andrew Ash);
- A useful benefit for members may be a facility for providing regular updates on rangeland issues compiled through media monitoring (Andrew Ash); this would need to be a function allocated to a specific volunteer or paid for by the Society – it could not be added to the responsibilities of the Social Media Editor or the Web Site Editor.

Action:

- Ron Hacker to relay this discussion to Council and request further information regarding Council's intentions for the membership drive;
- Andrew Ash to seek information regarding the logistics and costs of compiling and distributing regular media scans and circulate an example of this product (as distributed within CSIRO) to the PC.

11. Date of 2016 meetings

14 September (Ron Hacker will be overseas and an alternate Chair will be required)

23 November

The meeting closed at 7.20 pm.