



The Australian Rangeland Society

MINUTES PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE MEETING

Wednesday 23 November 2016

6.00 pm Australian Eastern Daylight Time
By Teleconference

1. Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 6.00 pm.
2. **Present:** Ron Hacker (Chair), Paul Novelly (left at 7 pm), Wal Whalley, David Eldridge, Amber Marshall (left at 6.50 pm), Jocelyn Davies (left at 6.37 pm), Noelene Duckett, Ken Hodgkinson (joined at 6.50 pm), Carol Ireland (Minutes Secretary)

Apologies: Andrew Ash, Don Burnside

3. **Additional items for general business:**
No other items

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** Motion: That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 14 September 2016, as amended, be accepted.

Moved: Wal Whalley;
Seconded: Amber Marshall
Carried.

5. **Matters arising from previous minutes (not listed as separate agenda items):**
No matters arising

6. The Rangeland Journal

6.1. Report from Editor-in-Chief (verbal)

Issue 5 of the Journal for 2016 has been published on-line but Committee members have not yet received hard copies. There are several papers ready for Issue 6, which will be published by the end of the year, and ~30 papers currently being processed. Wal Whalley is still handling some manuscripts as part of the transition process - these may eventually result in 4-5 published papers. Neil Macleod has indicated he is willing to stay on as an Associate Editor provided he is sent only pure economics manuscripts. Manuscripts are coming from CSIRO Publishing in large lots once a fortnight or so rather than one at a time and this is creating difficulties in managing work flows. Some associate editors are complaining about their workload; however all are very committed to the task.

Action: Paul Novelly to take up with CSIRO Publishing the late distribution of hard copies of Issue 5 and any matters affecting his work flow.

6.2. Additional Associate Editors

Paul Novelly is still looking for an Associate Editor for wildlife manuscripts. Ron Hacker

mentioned several names and will discuss these with Paul out of session.

Action: Paul Novelly and Ron Hacker to discuss a possible appointments out of session.

6.3. Advisory Editors – appointments and engagement

Ron Hacker indicated that although we still have vacancies for Advisory Editors it is important to engage with our existing appointees rather than focus on new appointments. There has really been no engagement with Advisory Editors since John Milne conducted a survey of their opinions in 2013. Ken Hodgkinson indicated that Advisory Editors extend the PCs network for seeking advice and add prestige to the Journal. They are important for a journal with global reach, and are commonly appointed by such journals. Ron Hacker noted that we have a Role Statement for Advisory Editors and that the Editor in Chief could usefully seek to engage our Advisory Editors around these responsibilities. They might also be able offer advice on the suitability of the tenderers for the new publishing contract.

Action: Paul Novelly and Ron Hacker to develop a communication to Advisory Editors seeking information about their activity in relation to their role statement, advising of the current tendering process for *The Rangeland Journal* and seeking any advice they may have on the suitability of the potential publishers.

6.4. Special issues

6.4.1. Mongolian Plateau (Jocelyn Davies)

All articles but one are back with authors for major revisions. One major paper from a guest editor has not yet been submitted which is concerning. When papers are returned there may still be a large amount of work for Jocelyn in editing the English. Jocelyn suggested that the journal should insist on use of professional English translation services before Chinese papers (in particular) are submitted. Paul Novelly indicated that his practice is to reject papers immediately (without distribution to Associate Editors) if the standard of English is not reasonable. The PC agreed that Jocelyn should return to authors any paper for the special issue that would require extensive editorial input to achieve a publishable standard.

6.4.2. Restore, Regenerate, Revegetate (Wal Whalley)

Ron Hacker asked if the signed contract had been returned from University of New England, thinking it may have been sent to Don Burnside.

Action: Ron Hacker to check with Don Burnside re the status of the contract.

6.4.3. Northern Development

Andrew had a phone conversation with Allan Dale, who is again Chair of the Developing Northern Australia Conference that will be held in the middle of next year. Allan is happy for us to progress a Special Issue of the journal based on the conference. Andrew expects that only some of the invited presentations will be relevant to the journal as it covers topics that go broader than rangeland interests. There will also be volunteered papers that might be of interest for a potential journal publication.

Andrew will put together a proposal for a special issue when he returns to the office next week, including a list of potential papers or topics. Some papers may need to be invited from people who will not be presenting at the conference next year. If the PC accepts the proposal we can begin to approach potential sponsors to provide the \$11,000 required. Immediate prospects are the Office of Northern Australia and the Developing Northern Australia CRC. The CRC has not yet been approved by the Minister but Andrew understands that will occur before Christmas. Once there is a Board and CEO in place we can approach them, though the timing might be tight if we want the funding locked in by March or April next year.

6.5. New Publishing Contract

6.5.1. Progress

Ron Hacker had circulated a brief report outlining responses to the call for Expressions of Interest, and updated this verbally (Appendix 1).

6.5.2. Process for tender evaluation

The PC discussed the process to be used to evaluate tenders. The agreed process is:

- All tenders will go to all members of the PC for initial assessment;
- A sub-committee will consider members' comments and the tenders in more detail and develop a recommendation for the PC; this sub-committee could include members of Council (who are not also members of the PC). (Note: some specialist expertise could be co-opted to this subcommittee);
- The PC will make a recommendation to Council.

Action: Ron Hacker to request that Council consider if and how it wishes to be represented on the sub-committee.

7. Range Management Newsletter

7.1. Report from the Editor (verbal)

The November RMN has been published on the website on time. Noelene is now chasing stories for the March 2017 issue. She will follow up the IRC Student prizewinners. She needs to follow-up with Annabel Walsh regarding Institutional Members as some are apparently not receiving the newsletter alert. Noelene has removed the reference to newsletter advertising from the web site and the RMN. The PC noted that the 'How to Advertise' page on the web site should contain more complete information about the process for advertising on the web site, and the cost.

Action: Ron Hacker to ask Don Burnside for a brief text about website advertising, including costs, to be posted on the website.

8. ARS web site

8.1. Report from the Editor

No report.

The PC noted that while some material is being posted to the web site in a timely manner there is still a large backlog of archival material that has not been posted.

Action: Ron Hacker will follow up with Camilla Osborn to seek a resolution.

9. Social Media

9.1. Report from the Social Media Editor (verbal)

Generally, the social media activity is progressing well. Amber Marshall will prepare her usual quarterly report and circulate it to the PC next week.

9.2. **Options for supporting Social Media Editor**

At the September PC meeting, Amber had indicated that she was having difficulty maintaining the effort required to manage the social media accounts now that she is in full time work. The major difficulty is the time required to source relevant material. Ron Hacker indicated that he had contacted Heidi Wright, who set up and managed the social media accounts initially, to see if she would be able to provide some support to Amber in sourcing content. Heidi had indicated that she could provide one relevant Facebook post per week, which could also be used for one or more Twitter posts, for \$30 (annual cost \$1,560). Amber had indicated that she would be willing to forego \$500 of her annual Honorarium to

receive this support. Council would therefore need to provide an additional \$1,060 p.a. to secure Heidi's services.

In discussing this proposal the PC accepted that the Society needed to conduct its social media activity well – an infrequently updated social media presence would not reflect favorably on ARS. Ron Hacker noted that at the outset we had understood that it might not be possible to sustain an effective social media presence on a purely voluntary basis. Amber Marshall indicated that the most useful assistance Heidi could provide would be a formulated post, not just a link to relevant content. Ron Hacker indicated that he understood that this was Heidi's intention. If a high quality post could be provided once a week Amber would be freed up to focus on the social media publicity campaign for the next conference which will be critical in gaining support for the conference and probably new members. Carol Ireland indicated that membership usually grew in a conference year. It was noted that only 10-12 new members would be sufficient to cover the additional annual cost of providing the support proposed. We currently have 650 Facebook 'likes' and 672 followers on Twitter which considerably exceeds the number of members. The underlying demographics are not available. Ron Hacker indicated that he had discussed this proposal with Don Burnside prior to the meeting and Don had been supportive.

Motion: That the PC recommend to Council that it fund the services of Wright Social to provide one relevant post to Facebook and Twitter per week at a cost of \$30 (\$1,560 per annum) and that this be partly funded by a reduction of \$500 p.a. in the Honorarium paid to the Social Media Editor.

Moved: Paul Novelly

Seconded: Jocelyn Davies

Carried.

10. Other items of General Business

10.1. Vacancy on the Publications Committee (*vice* Steve Blake)

Ron Hacker made a number of suggestions regarding possible replacements for Steve Blake and raised the possibility that someone with a background in publishing other than as an author might be useful. After some discussion PC agreed that Ron could informally approach Kate Forest.

Action: Ron Hacker to informally sound out Kate Forrest.

10.2. Reviewers for 2017 Conference

The Organising Committee had asked the PC to provide a list of possible reviewers for Abstracts submitted to the conference. Ron Hacker suggested that CSIRO Publishing could provide a list of Australian reviewers used the journal in recent years.

Action: Ron Hacker to request a list of Australian reviewers used by TRJ from CSIRO Publishing.

11. Date of future meetings if required (two weeks before Council Meetings)

Meetings are held, if required, two weeks prior to Council meetings. Dates for PC meeting in 2017 will therefore be:

January 11

March 15

May 3 (if required, prior to AGM)

Action: Carol Ireland to send further dates of Council meetings to Ron Hacker when available.

The meeting closed at 7.25 pm.

Appendix 1.

**PROGRESS WITH PUBLICATION TENDERS FOR THE RANGELAND JOURNAL
as of 20 November 2016**

COMPANY CONTACTED	EXPRESSION OF INTEREST
CSIRO Publishing	Will submit Eoi by 15/12/2016.
Wiley Blackwell	Eoi received 18/11/2016 following teleconference; information package forwarded 20/11/2016.
Elsevier	In response to request, Elsevier advised that TRJ fits into the Environmental Science category; EOI to be forwarded internally to relevant publisher (16/11/2016)
SAGE Publishing	Eoi received 15/11/2016; information package forwarded 16/11/2016; teleconference scheduled for 25/11/2015.
Cambridge University Press	Acknowledgement of receipt 14/11/2016; no further response.
Oxford University Press	No response