

**THE AUSTRALIAN RANGELAND SOCIETY
PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE (PC)**

**Meeting on Wednesday, 6 February, 2019
by teleconference**

MINUTES

Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 6.02 pm (EDST).

1. **Present:** Ron Hacker (Chair), Don Burnside, Daryl Green, Wal Whalley, Russell Grant, Paul Novelly, Noelene Duckett (joined at 6.10), Sarah Moles, Andrew Ash
2. **Apologies:** Jen Silcock, David Eldridge
3. **Additional items for general business:**

Nil

4. **Minutes of the previous meeting – 7 November, 2018**

Motion: That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 7 November 2018 be accepted as circulated.

Moved: Wal Whalley; Seconded: Paul Novelly. Carried.

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

Ron Hacker indicated that he had contacted PC members, Associate Editors and Advisory Editors whose terms had expired. All have agreed to an extension. We now have 18 Associate Editors, 9 Advisory Editors and 11 PC members all of whom have current appointments.

6. **The Rangeland Journal**

6.1. *Report from Editor-in-Chief*

Paul Novelly reported verbally. 2018 was a good year. All six issues were published within the calendar year for a total of 618 published pages. Submissions so far this year have been slow. Volume 41, Issue 1 is ready to go and will be published by February 25th. Special Issue from the Port Augusta Conference is progressing slowly. One paper has not been accepted by either the Associate Editor or the Editor-in-Chief and this is delaying publication. The idea of a Special Issue on equilibrium/disequilibrium concepts is not attracting any support from those originally interested and will not be pursued. No proposal has been received from China re a special issue on grassland regeneration, as foreshadowed late in 2018.

A couple of Associate Editors are not performing well.

Action: Paul will discuss the issue with Ron Hacker.

6.2. *Special issues (SIs)*

6.2.1. *2017 Biennial Conference (Don Burnside)*

Feedback from Martin Andrew and Russell Sinclair has indicated 6 papers accepted (5 full papers, 1 lightning paper) with 3 still in revision. Paul asked whether Mark Howden had submitted a paper. Paul indicated that the guest editors are doing an excellent job and delays are not due to them.

Action: Don will follow up with Russell and Martin about the Howden paper, particularly as it was associated with the John Milne Lecture.

6.2.2. *Management of Total Grazing Pressure (Ron Hacker)*

Guest editors are Ron Hacker, Katrina Sinclair and Lester Pahl. Draft contract is currently with NSW DPI. Papers are starting to be written. Ron is hopeful it will be completed in 2019.

Action: Paul will contact CSIRO Publishing to set up ScholarOne to direct submitted papers to the Special Issue.

6.2.3. *Other possibilities (Ecological degradation and regeneration of grasslands; practical impact of disequilibrium theory; drought policy)*

Disequilibrium is not progressing, SI on Wambiana probably won't occur until 2020-2021, SI on drought policy not attracting interest and Ron suggested a White Paper may be a better option.

6.3. *Possible commissioned papers*

6.3.2. Grazing management of southern Australian rangelands (Don Burnside)

Don hasn't yet progressed this but will follow up with Council on his return from India.

6.3.3. 30th anniversary of Westoby et al. (state and transition concept) (Ron/David)

An invited paper from Mark Westoby is proposed and Mark W has expressed some interest.

Action: Ron Hacker will follow-up with David Eldridge.

6.4. *Engagement of Advisory Editors (Ron)*

Ron's email to Advisory Editors (AE) suggesting a number of options for further engagement with the production of the journal had been circulated to the PC. Three AEs have responded indicating their willingness to provide editorial input to TRJ (by reading several manuscripts and noting any editorial errors) and one has provided feedback on the flyer.

6.5. *CSIRO Publishing attendance at conferences*

Email from Jenny Foster requesting advice about conferences at which ARS would like CSIRO Publishing to promote the journal in 2019-20. Ron suggested that we should focus on the IRC in Kenya in 2020-21, apart from the ARS and ESA conferences in 2019. This view was supported by the Publications Committee.

Action: Ron to follow-up with David Eldridge to see if he is attending the ESA conference, and request advice on the best approach for CSIRO Publishing to follow at that conference.

Don mentioned that the Australasian Agricultural and Resource Economics Society Conference will be held in Melbourne next week and although it is short notice that may be a promotion opportunity for CSIRO Publishing.

Action: Don will send Ron the link to the conference and Ron will contact Jenny Foster.

7. Range Management Newsletter

7.1. *Report from Editor*

Noelene had nothing to report.

7.2. *Feedback from Council*

No formal feedback from Council as yet regarding the discussion paper on development of the RMN though it was discussed at the last Council meeting.

8. **Social Media**

8.1. *Report from Social Media Editor*

Sarah provided a written report and sought feedback from the PC on the content of the report. Sarah to follow-up to find out who “Chloe” is that is posting to Facebook. Sarah questioned the value of Instagram to the ARS audience. Sarah indicated she was retweeting news items, without comment, that may be perceived as political e.g. climate change, Murray Darling Basin but which are topical. There was some discussion on the nature of posts that would be acceptable for the ARS. Ron indicated that the guidelines for ARS social media activity are set out in the Social Media User’s Manual and Don indicated that the objectives of ARS are set out in the Articles and Memorandum of Association. Don and Paul argued that posting of articles that are topical and controversial, without providing comment from the Society, should be encouraged. However, Ron indicated that care needed to be exercised in sharing posts that have an overt political slant.

Action: Don to forward the Articles and Memorandum of Association to Sarah.

8.2. *Finalisation of Wright Social contract (Don Burnside)*

Final payment has been made.

9. **ARS web site**

9.1. *On-going issues with ZymZen (Russell, Don, Noelene, Ron)*

Russell circulated a background paper on the issues ARS is experiencing with ZymZen and how it is affecting operations. Russell indicated that the only positive outcome in the last six months has been the establishment of the link from the Members Area to the journal. He is concerned that ARS should move quickly in case ZymZen fails.

The key frustration is the inability of ZymZen to respond effectively or in a timely manner to the issues raised. Issues around the ability to send or receive emails are a significant problem. Don has had to send out subscription emails manually. Noelene indicated she has given up on ZymZen and hasn’t received any communications from them. Ron noted that he is aware that a number of other clients have recently left ZymZen.

The annual maintenance contract with ZymZen is \$1650 and they are asking for additional money to maintain email addresses.

It was agreed by the PC that the current arrangement with ZymZen be terminated.

Ron has drawn up a draft tender document to seek a new provider for the ARS website.

Action: PC members to provide feedback on the draft tender document by February 7, 2019.

Motion:

Noting that the current web site provider, ZymZen, has proved unsatisfactory over a considerable period of time in its ability to communicate with the Society in an effective or timely manner, respond to requests for support or attend to technical issues affecting the operation of the site, the Publication Committee recommends to Council that tenders be called immediately for an alternative website provider and that the Council considers the draft tender document that is attached.

Moved by Noelene Duckett and Seconded by Wal Whalley. Carried (Note: David Eldridge, an apology for the meeting, had previously advised that he would support a motion to change providers).

Ron indicated that the transfer of material from one provider to another would be easier if the new provider can get into the inner workings of the website. This may be an issue with ZymZen and there are unknowns in the process that might make it a difficult transfer which may contain some risk.

10. General Business

10.1. Expiry of Chair's appointment

Ron Hacker's appointment expires on June 30 and he indicated he won't be seeking another term.

10.2 CSIRO Publishing

Wal Whalley indicated that the CSIRO Rangeland Journal "flyer" needs updating as it is badly out of date.

Action: Ron Hacker will update the flyer now that he has feedback from Advisory Editors and pass it on to Jenny Foster.

11. Date of future meetings

27 March; 8 May; 3 July; 2-5 September (Biennial conference); 13 November

Meeting closed at 7.30 pm.