

Minutes of meeting of the Publications Committee of the Australian Rangeland Society held on 29 September 2010 in Bourke, New South Wales, Australia.

Meeting commenced at 7 am.

1. Present

Chris Anderson (Production Editor from CSIRO Publishing)
Don Burnside
David Eldridge
Ken Hodgkinson (in Chair)
Peter Johnston
Larissa Lauder (Minute Secretary)
Neil Macleod (Associate Editor)
Tony Presland (Associate Editor)
Mark Stafford-Smith (Associate Editor)
John Taylor (ARS President)
Wal Whalley

2. Apologies

Andrew Ash (Associate Editor)
Brandon Bestelmeyer (Associate Editor)
Jocelyn Davies
Noelene Duckett
Maria Fernandez-Gimenez (Associate Editor)
Bernard Hubert (Associate Editor)
John Milne (Associate Editor)

3. Minutes of Charters Towers meeting, 30 September 2008

Minutes (Appendix 1) circulated before the meeting were accepted as a true record; moved Don/seconded Mark.

4. Matters arising from Charters Towers minutes

4.1 Contents analysis

No action taken by Ken and Wal. Don suggests Chris Anderson has addressed the issue in his report to be tabled. Wal was unsure what was meant originally but felt that the content analysis had occurred anyhow. There were abstracts on the web site of the papers of the journal and also contents on the CSIRO website.

4.2 Increase membership of Publications Committee

Ken reported that some progress had been made. Possible names were given to the committee recently but no decision had been made. Other names suggested were Joel Brown (USA), ZhiBiao Nan (China). Don suggested Pauline Grierson should be considered. Ken is to continue exploring names and to keep gender equity in mind. Murray McGregor had been nominated by the new CRC for Remote Economic Development and Ken will meet with Jan Ferguson (CEO) to further discuss the nomination.

4.3 Increase number of Associate Editors

Ken reported that this task was nearly complete. Since Charters Towers Bernard Hubert, John Milne and Tony Pressland had been appointed by Council on recommendation of the PC. Ken had contacted Gabrielle Oliva in Argentina and he had agreed to the appointment and as soon as he sends his CV Ken will formally place his name before the Committee. Ken had contacted Ann Waters Beyer, who had a strong interest but not now.

Wal had discussed with Gabrielle the possibility of papers from the Argentine IRG for a special issue but these would not be available till after the Congress. The only gap in international coverage is Africa and Mark suggested Pauline Dube from University of Gabon. Wal made the comment that some associate editors, when sent papers from outside of their region, struggle with the papers.

- 4.4 Scanning of national and international conferences
Ken periodically checks coming conferences.
- 4.5 Initiate and vet proposals for Special Issues
Ken, Wal and Don continue to think about topics for Special Issues. Proposals are brought to the PC for consideration.
- 4.6 Letter to NRM's etc
A letter was sent from the Chairman to the CRC for Remote Economic Development and they agreed to continue involvement in the relationship with the Society and to continue with cooperation with special issues. Ken noted that a special issue on remote development was scheduled for 2011 with Craig James as guest editor. To date no action had been taken to formally contact NRMs and CMAs. David Eldridge had prepared an electronic brochure for use which is now available on the web site and for future contact with NRM's and CMA's. Don mentioned the National Rangeland NRM Alliance and Kate Forrest as the contact and that brochures could be sent to her for distribution.
- 4.7 Survey of policy makers etc
No survey has been able to be conducted and therefore it was decided to discontinue this matter, on the grounds that there is no time to do this.
- 4.8 Any other business
None.

5. Correspondence

Ken reported there has been a very high flow of email correspondence since the last meeting which he has been unable to document for tabling. He proposed the emails be burnt to a disc and archived.

6. Business arising from correspondence

None.

7. The Rangeland Journal

7.1 Editor's Report

Wal tabled his report (see Appendix 2) and spoke on recent highlights (eg. doubling of Impact Factor, two Special Issues/year). He thanked CSIRO Publications for their professional publication and the support of Dr Chris Anderson. Wal informed the meeting he will be stepping down as Editor-in-Chief on 30 June 2011 and would like to be available to assist in handover.

Ken thanked Wal for his report and for his sustained and very significant contribution to the Society through his role as Editor-in Chief of The Rangeland Journal. He drew attention to the growth of the Journal during his time as EiC and the cheerful way he promoted the journal with integrity and enthusiasm. He conveyed to Wal that the Publications Committee were deeply grateful for his significant contribution.

7.2 Production Editor's Report

Chris tabled his report (see Appendix 3) and presented key information from the report by means of a PowerPoint presentation. Some key points were

- The Journal is published on time.
- Downloads per paper indicate the Journal is in a preferred group for potential authors in the CSIRO Publishing set (Institutional Subscribers use this as a value indicator for renewing subscriptions).
- Impact Factor has stabilised.
- Financial statement (as shown) is not complete for January-June.
- Although a tight budget is shown there is no major financial risk to the Society that cannot be managed.

Chris then addressed the draft Development Plan. John asked where publishing was going in the future (say over next 5 years). Chris replied

- Into social media. Younger subscribers could contributing via Facebook.
- Print media will not disappear soon. For the ARS print copy benefits membership. But electronic only publishing of TRJ would cost ARS much less.
- Greater importance of metadata etc to make searching for articles easier with more linkages to other areas as in Wikipedia
- There will be greater social interaction and communication arising from papers in the near future with means of digitally doing this. Peer review will remain as the means of maintaining scientific rigor.

Chris then forecast possible developments for the Journal. He foresaw

- Continued value in commissioning Special Issues
- Increased flow of volunteer papers after greater exposure of the Journal by Editor-in-Chief and Associate Editors.
- Greater number of downloads.

A general discussion followed development issues.

- Mark asked for an assessment of rejection rates for submitted ms. Wal indicated most rejections were because of poor science and most rejections were of ms submitted from outside Australia.
- Mark asked what the niche is for the Journal and noted Austral Ecology had built a Southern Hemisphere niche. John considered there is poor appreciation of Australian range science in the USA and opposition from the Northern Hemisphere. Mark thought we needed to focus more on content than be in marketing opposition. Chris thought we needed to publish Australian research that shows international relevance. Wal indicated local interest only papers are rejected. Mark thought a problem is that Australian range science literature is

unattached and there are poor linkages with other centres for range science, particularly in the Northern Hemisphere. Don expressed concern that the Journal could detach from society issues. David thought that the Journal needs to stand alone.

- Chris indicated that the Journal was attractive to publishers and to purchase. He indicated joint ownership (ARS and CSIRO Publishing) would have advantages. They would publish issues more quickly, target institutions, engage in more aggressive marketing, increase advertising, increase sponsorship of targeted papers/reviews/issues, name review series, share risk of failure and increase exposure at conferences.
- Chris said that 6 issues/year is achievable. Don said ARS needs a budget and business plan before decisions could be made on the publisher. John asked for Council to see the plan as well. Wal moved and Don seconded that CSIRO Publishing submit a business plan for 25% ownership of the journal by end of November. Carried.
- Tony moved and Neil seconded motion that Council extend the present contract with CSIRO Publishing until 30 June 2011 to allow for consultation on alternatives.

8 Range Management Newsletter

Report from the Newsletter Editor (Appendix 4) was accepted but not discussed because time had elapsed. Committee members are to read report and discuss at a phone meeting to be arranged.

9 ARS Website

No discussion.

10 Any other business

No other business.

The meeting closed at 8.34 am.

Appendix 1

Minutes of meeting of the Publications Committee of the Australian Rangeland Society held 30 September 2008 in Charters Towers, Queensland, Australia.

Meeting commenced at 7 am.

8. Present

Don Burnside
David Eldridge
Ken Hodgkinson (in Chair)
Peter Johnston
Neil Macleod (Associate Editor)
Tony Pressland (Associate Editor)
Mark Stafford Smith (Associate Editor)
Wal Whalley

9. Apologies

Andrew Ash
Brandon Bestelmeyer
Noelene Duckett
Maria Fernandez-Gimenez
Ruijun Long

10. Minutes of Renmark meeting, 4 and 5 September 2006

Minutes circulated before the meeting were accepted as a true record; moved Don/seconded David

11. Matters arising from Renmark minutes

10.1 Contents analysis.

No action had been taken. There was uncertainty as to what to do. Need to revisit at next Biennial Conference meeting. The matter was left to **Ken and Wal to find a person to conduct the analysis of Journal, Newsletter and Website.**

10.2 Increase membership of Publications Committee

It was confirmed that membership of the Committee should be enlarged by appointing scientists from other countries. This would emphasise more strongly the international status of the Journal, and shift the image of the Committee to that of an Editorial Board. **Ken to find suitable people and bring these to the Committee.**

10.3 Increase number of Associate Editors

Ken reported that 4 international Associate Editors; Brendon Bestelmeyer (USA), Maria Fernandez-Gimenez (USA), Ruijun Long (China), Esther Mwangi (USA) and one national Associate Editor; Mark Stafford Smith had been appointed by Council. It was agreed that

scientists from Europe, South America and Africa should be sought.

Ken to prepare cases.

10.4 Scanning of national and international conferences

No specific action reported.

10.5 Initiate and vet proposals for Special Issues

Don, Ken and Wal to continue looking out for “Special Issues”

10.6 Letter to NRM’s etc

It was agreed a letter to CRC’s, NRM’s and CMA’s should be sent to seek papers to be published in TRJ. Contacts to include Steve Wilson (Desert Channels), John Gavin (SA Outback) and Andrew Drysdale (Qld). The Rangeland Alliance of NRM Groups could produce papers from a conference for TRJ. **David to generate an electronic brochure.**

10.7 Survey of policy makers etc

Nothing to report.

10.8 Any other business

Nothing raised.

12. Minutes of Hohhot meeting, 4 and 5 September 2006

Minutes circulated before the meeting were accepted as a true record; moved Don/seconded Neil

13. Matters arising from Hohhot minutes

6.1 Proposal for Special Issue on governance

The proposal by Ruijun Long for a Special Issue on rangeland governance was awaiting development; nothing to report.

6.2 Growth of contributed papers

The question was asked whether too many Special Issues were being published at the expense of contributed papers. This issue had been discussed with CSIRO Publishing and they did not think so because if a Special Issue was timely then the papers would be highly cited and the Impact Factor would be raised. The two types of papers should therefore compliment rather than compete.

6.3 Four issues per year

The increase in the number of issues from 2 to 4 was now proceeding and Wal reported that there will be sufficient papers over the next 2 years, that is, 2009 and 2010.

6.4 Special Issue on water use efficiency of different animal production systems

Wal reported that the Special Issue arising from an ILRI meeting was developing well and would be published as Issue 2 in 2009.

6.5 Any other business

Peter advised that John Taylor was requesting use of papers from TRJ for teaching purposes.

Wal advised that money from papers purchased through CSIRO Publishing is accounted.

14. Correspondence

Ken reported that correspondence was extensive and he had not been able to prepare a statement.

15. Business arising from correspondence

None.

16. The Rangeland Journal

9.1 Editor-in-Chief's Report

EDITOR-IN-CHIEF'S REPORT September, 2008

Overview

The upturn in the flow of papers that commenced in 2005 following the publication of the first Issue by CSIRO Publishing, has continued with 46 papers being received to date (Table 1). A highlight has been the production of the Special Issue sponsored by the Desert Knowledge CRC with Guest Editor Mark Stafford Smith. This is the largest single issue ever produced by The Rangeland Journal comprising 17 papers and a Guest Editorial and running to 195 A4 pages. Our thanks are due to Mark and his assistants for the production of such an outstanding issue. The production of the second Special Issue for this year with Ken Hodgkinson and Nan Zhibiao as Guest Editors was the second highlight for 2008. This issue was made available to all the delegates attending the combined International Rangeland/International Grassland Congress in Hohhot in June/July this year. A third regular issue for 2008 is in the final stages of production.

Table 1. Record of papers and the results for 2006 to 2008 to date.

Year	Received	Accepted	Rejected	Pending
2006	47	19	20	8
2007	69	37	26	6
2008 (to date)	46	9	16	21

Current status

We welcome a third new Associate Editor from the USA in Esther Mwangi from Harvard. We have several more appointments to make and then we will have a truly international team of Associate Editors.

Tony Pressland is under way as Guest Editor of the Special Issue to be produced next year of papers from the Charters Towers Biennial Conference. We do thank you, Tony, for taking on this task.

Ben Norton has moved back to Logan, Utah and is acting as Guest Editor from our side, with Tilahun Amede from IILRI and IMWI, in a Special Issue on the efficiency of water use by various livestock enterprises. Ben and Tilahun are at present sorting out the papers that are available to choose those that should be sent out for review.

Interest in the sponsoring of a second Special Issue by the Desert Knowledge CRC in 2009 has been expressed and we will welcome further comments from Mark Stafford Smith at the meeting of the Augmented Publications Committee at Charters Towers.

Thus, with a regular issue of contributed papers, we are planning four issues for 2009.

We have now gone live with OSPREy for the electronic handling of papers. We are at present in the throes of getting the system to cope with the way our Associate Editors work and in educating the Associate Editors in how to make the system work for them.

Papers that have been completed are now available on the CSIRO Publishing web site as 'Papers in press'. This facility, provided by CSIRO Publishing, means that once papers have been finalised, they are available to readers who have web access well before the paper version is printed.

The future

Ken Hodgkinson has been investigating the possibility of a Special Issue on the Murray-Darling basin for 2010 and will report on progress at the meeting.

My special thanks to the Associate Editors and to members of the Publications Committee (especially to Ken Hodgkinson) for the support I have received since I became Editor. The support of Chris Anderson, Saumitra Banerjee and the rest of the team at CSIRO Publications and their expertise has been essential for the production of the Journal and deserve all our thanks.

R D B Whalley
Editor
22 August 2008

9.2 Matters Arising from Editor-in-Chief's Report

9.2.1 **Special Issues**

Climate of Change. Tony Pressland would guest edit this issue of keynote papers presented at the 15th Biennial Conference. Ten papers were expected; there were already 6 papers in OSPREY.

Water Use Efficiency of Different Ways of Cattle Grazing. This set of papers was coming from ILRI. Ben Norton would be the Guest Editor for this issue.

Desert Knowledge. Mark indicated there would be a DK Symposium in November 2008 and that it would be likely papers would arise from this. **Wal to contact Craig James.**

Murray-Darling Basin. Ken reported that he, Sarah Ryan and Mark had met with Richard Moxham and Jason Alexandra of the MDBC in Canberra to develop a proposal for a Special Issue on the management of the Basin. It was

envisaged that this Issue could provide focus for the next Biennial Conference, especially if it were decided to be held in Bourke. Ken was confident that Sarah would be able to drive the process and that the MDBC would financially support the initiative. It was envisaged that the ARS would act as broker for the funding (ca. \$100K) and that Sarah Ryan would be the Guest Editor for the Special Issue. Ken would be involved in developing the proposal that would need to be put to Council for approval.

It was moved by Wal and seconded by Don, that Ken proceed with the proposal and that Sarah Ryan be the Guest Editor.

9.2.2 **Appreciation**

It was noted that the meeting appreciated the hard work of Wal in his Editor-in-Chief role.

At this time (7.52 am) Mark, Tony and Peter left the meeting.

9.3 Production Editor's Report

The Rangeland Journal

Editor: Wal Whalley **Production Editor: Saumitra Banerjee**

Chris Anderson
Journals Publisher
Agriculture & Plant Sciences
25 September 2008

9.4 Business arising from Production Editor's Report

9.4.1 **Impact Factor**

There was discussion about use of self-citation and citation of papers within a Special Issue and it was agreed that this is appropriate for Special Issues. There was some concern that self-citation in contributed papers should not be encouraged but no agreement was reached. As it stands the Editor-in-Chief is responsible for seeing that citations are appropriate.

9.4.2 **Half-life**

The half-life of TRJ papers is high, and rising, probably because of the electronic access to TRJ papers now possible on the CSIRO Publishing Website.

9.4.3 **Profit from Journal**

Ken pointed out that profit from TRJ would return to the Society once the profit level exceeded 10%. Income generated by CSIRO Publishing for TRJ is now significant and helped by the CSIRO suite of journals now available electronically to 200

universities in China. It was understood that a similar sale of the journals had occurred in India.

17. Range Management Newsletter

10.1.1 Editor's Report

Range Management Newsletter 2008 Editors Report

Noelene Duckett

Three issues of the Range Management Newsletter continue to be published each year – in roughly March, July and November.

CONTENT

As Editor, I continue to look for articles that cover the broad interests of our membership. Recent issues have contained articles looking at biodiversity management, catchment repair, costs of production, sustainable grazing, fire and land management, vegetation monitoring and rangeland education/training. We have also been lucky to receive a number of well-written book reviews and obituaries.

As has been the case of recent years, there is always a hunt for articles to include in the newsletter. Usually only a few of the longer articles that are published are voluntarily contributed although a majority of shorter articles are sent in by authors without too much haranguing by the Editor. I also continue to be interested in including less-traditional ARS topics – tourism, social science, indigenous issues etc so please let me know if you have any leads in this regard.

It remains hard to receive up-to-date information from the ARS Council about what the Society is currently involved with. I would like to remind the Council that the newsletter could provide an excellent forum for dissemination news to members.

PUBLICATION ISSUES

Unfortunately the last few issues of the newsletter have not come out as punctually as I would have liked due to varying circumstances. In a couple of instances, there has been long turn-around times at the printer (nearly 6 weeks in one case) and Malcolm Howes was ill and was hospitalised in another instance. The July newsletter was also delayed, however this was intentional – publishing the newsletter nearly a month late allowed us to include several reports from the IRC/IGC. I would especially like to thank the authors of these reports (Andrew Ash, Scott Laidlaw, Ann Waters-Bayer and Don Burnside) for getting their reports to me so quickly.

The newsletter continues to be published by SW Precision Print in Busselton, WA. They have been doing a great job for the ARS for several years. Because

of the long turn-around times in previous issues, I have begun sending the newsletter to the printer as a high-quality, print-ready pdf file rather than a Word file. This has definitely reduced the number of times proofs are sent back and forth because of formatting errors and has really streamlined the process.

Malcolm Howes has continued to do a great job liaising with the printer and also supervising the posting of the newsletter. I would like to thank Council for approving the budget to allow Malcolm to have ACTIV Industries label and package the newsletter. If it wasn't for this I believe that Malcolm would have quit and we would then have to find an alternate person to handle the printing and posting of the newsletter.

THE FUTURE

I am excited with the possibilities that the new ARS website will bring to the newsletter. I am hoping that much of the content will be published on the website, making the information available more quickly than is possible from a printed newsletter that is published only 3 times a year. I am optimistic that a greater number of 'newsy' articles will be secured both from members and Council.

I would be grateful, however, if the Publications Committee, and Council, could provide some guidance of the future direction of the newsletter now that the website is up and running. I would like to know what people think about issues such as:

- Should the newsletter be published in its entirety on the website or only the major articles?
- Should articles be put on the website as soon as they have been edited or only when an issue has been completed?

I look forward to the challenges ahead!

10.2 The Editor's report was received with thanks. Moved Don; seconded Wal.

10.3 Matters arising from Editor's Report

10.3.1 RMN subscribers should be asked if they wish to receive the Newsletter electronically only. Graeme Tupper to arrange this in next subscription notice.

10.3.2 The RMN will only be available to members on the website but after 12 months after publishing the Newsletters will be available for public access on the Website.

10.3.3 Noelene to send out an email alert to members advising that the RMN is available for viewing on the website in the members-only section.

10.3.4 The committee needs to explore how to charge non-members for access to the latest newsletter.

The meeting closed at 8.18 am.

Appendix 2

EDITOR'S REPORT September, 2010

Overview

The upturn in the flow of papers that commenced in 2005 coincided with our joining CSIRO Publishing, has continued with 49 papers being received to date this year (Table 1). A highlight has been a more than doubling of our Impact Factor from 2006-2007 (0.545) to 2007-2008 (1.232). A fourth regular issue will be produced in December this year and we already have seven papers accepted and more in the final stages of revision. This flow of papers is very satisfactory and we can easily sustain two regular issues a year supplemented by two Special Issues. Tony Pressland is Guest Editor for a Special Issue derived from the papers to be presented at the Bourke Conference in 2011 and Craig James is negotiating a Special Issue on Desert Knowledge also for 2011. Therefore we seem secure for four issues for Vol. 33.

The more recent change is to include a photograph on the cover of TRJ. I will be interested in your comments about this latest attempt to make the Journal more attractive to readers.

Table 1. Record of papers and the results for 2007 to 2010 to date.

Year	Received	Accepted	Rejected	Pending
2007	69	40	29	0
2008	71	36	35	0
2009	81	41	32	8
2010 (to date)	49	11	19	18

Current status

Now that the ARS web site is in operation, I have been uploading the Abstracts of each issue of TRJ as they appear.

Ken has been working hard increasing the number of Associate Editors and the Publications Committee to bring them to full strength.

Congratulations to Murray McGregor, Glenn Edwards and Sarah Ryan for the two excellent Special Issues that have been produced this year. The Guest Editors we have used over the years have done superb jobs and I do thank them all. I also want to

thank Chris Anderson and Saumitra Banerjee and his team for getting the MDB Special Issue completed in time for the Bourke Conference.

CSIRO Publishing is changing from OSPRey to a new, more user-friendly electronic manuscript-handling software some time in the near future. Those of you who have battled with OSPRey will no doubt look forward to this change.

The future

The job of Editor-in-Chief of The Rangeland Journal has grown substantially over the last five years or so. Sadly, with the passing of the years, my work output rate has decreased and as the job is getting bigger, I am getting slower. I really do think that the time has come to hand over the reins to a younger, more efficient Editor-in-Chief during 2011. I would be happy to remain as an Associate Editor and so assist where I can. However, I believe that the 30th June, 2011 should mark the end of my tenure in my present position.

My special thanks to the Associate Editors and to the members of the Publications Committee (especially to Ken Hodgkinson) for the support I have received since I became Editor. The support of Chris Anderson, Saumitra Banerjee and the rest of the team at CSIRO Publications and their expertise has been essential for the production of the Journal and deserve all our thanks.

R D B Whalley
Editor
21 September 2008

Appendix 3

The Rangeland Journal

(Editor: Dr Wal Whalley; Production Editor: Mr Saumitra Banerjee)

Commercial in Confidence - 27 Sept 2010 Update

Appendix 4

Range Management Newsletter Editor's Report

for the Publications Committee Meeting to be held in Bourke, Wednesday 29 September 2010

Newsletter Production and Publishing

The *RMN* continues to be published three times a year – in March, July and November. The July edition usually includes yearly reports from Council which are tabled during the Annual General Meeting of the Society. The last 3 issues of the newsletter (November 2009, March and July 2010) have been published both in hard copy and on the ARS website.

Hard Copy

The hard copy version of the newsletter has continued to be produced in the same format as previous years. Individual articles are formatted and edited in Word and are then converted to PDF format for printing. Recent issues have been either 12-16 pages in length, with a majority being 16 pages. Graeme Tupper does a fantastic job liaising with the printer to have the newsletter printed and posted – thanks Graeme!

Website Version

I am pleased that we have finally been able to publish the newsletter on the Society's website. After a bit of a learning curve on the first newsletter, I am now much more familiar with the system and can do it much faster than before. For this electronic version, each article must be uploaded individually, and the photos must also be uploaded onto the server, so it does take some manipulation and time – but it is definitely worth it! Ken Hodgkinson has done a great job in getting the website up and running, and he has been a fantastic supporter towards finally getting the newsletter published electronically.

Newsletter Content

The flow of articles has continued at a slow but steady rate. Over the last year or two, approximately half the more major articles that have been included have been voluntarily submitted by the author(s), and in general there continues to be reasonable interest in article preparation from authors who are asked to contribute. Contributions relating to work in progress, publication notices/reviews, and meeting and conference notices/summaries (unless funded by the ARS) have been hard to come by.

The communication channels relating to the Society's business are slowly being improved. Russell Grant provided excellent updates on preparations for the Bourke Conference, and Carolyn has kept me informed of Council business in a reasonably timely manner. I am looking forward to working with John Taylor, who I am hoping will write a "From the President" column for each upcoming newsletter.

It is also gratifying for me to know that articles from the newsletter do get noticed as I pointed out in my *RMN* 10/1 (March 2010) editorial:

“Can having an article published in this newsletter have an impact – you decide! In March 2009, David Wilcox and Fitzgerald submitted an article for RMN 09/1 entitled “Unintended Consequences of an Early Mining Boom” – this report focused on investigations of weedy cacti that had escaped from old settlements in the Leonora district of Western Australia. It was found that a number of species of cacti had become established as weeds and had spread considerable distances from the original point of introduction. Consequently, Wilcox and Fitzgerald expressed their concerns about the potential threat posed by weedy cacti and wondered if others had similar observations. Mike Chuk’s article in this newsletter (see page 6) details how Wilcox and Fitzgerald’s original article aroused interest from a number of organisations and ultimately led to the formation of a national body, known as the Australian Invasive Cacti Network, to raise awareness of cacti as a significant threat to biodiversity and production along with providing a forum for exchange of information on the taxonomy, biology and control of invasive cacti. Well done guys – articles in this publication do not go un-noticed!!

Thoughts for the Future

When Ken Hodgkinson asked me to prepare this report, he suggested that I look back at the ideas and recommendations that were tabled at 2005 Canberra meeting of the Publications Committee (the meeting following the Review of ARS Publications), to see whether I could come up with any ideas that would further the newsletter.

Several general suggestions to improve the newsletter were made at this meeting including:

- *The RMN should be published and distributed electronically (while retaining an option for hard copy distribution) and accessible via the web site*
- *The RMN should be published quarterly.*
- *The Range Management Newsletter (RMN) should be revised in presentation, content and layout to make it more current and enticing to a wider spectrum of readers.*

More specific suggestions included:

- *Appoint State representatives, book reviewer agent, etc and PC members to prepare and seek out material (“hot issues”, new resources, new policy, major new research, “think pieces”, youth orientated articles, “controversial” lead articles, thematic issues, conference details, recent publications, reports on conferences, innovators comments, current affairs, etc) for the RMN using the highly successful ESA model.*
- *Place a greater focus on people – innovators, rangeland people in the news, profiles of Council members, profiles of long standing members, scientists working in rangelands, pastoral administrators, politicians with a policy interest in rangelands, ARS award winners.*

My Comments in Response:

1. The process for publishing and distributing the newsletter electronically, as well as in hard copy, is certainly up and running. However, I would also like to see back issues of the newsletter uploaded on to the website as well. I am not sure how this would best be done – we could either:
 - a. Upload older issues manually like the current issues (each article reformatted and uploaded separately, photos to be placed on server and manually inserted etc). The format would then be the same as current issues with list of articles given at the top. This would be a time consuming procedure but could be done over time.

- b. Upload each issue of the newsletter as a PDF file. On screen, the back issues would then look like the printed copy of the newsletter, not the on-line version. I am not sure if the website is designed to upload files in this format at the moment but I am sure it is possible. This method would be quick and easy – I have PDF's for all the newsletters dating back to March 2007, and would also be able to convert Word files to PDF's for all newsletters from March 2001 – November 2006 without too much trouble.
2. I am not opposed to increasing the frequency of newsletters, however at present I am not receiving anywhere near enough material for this to happen.
3. I would be fully supportive of changing the look of the hard copy of the newsletter. I would love to make the RMN look more like a modern, exciting “magazine” – at the moment, I find the look of the newsletter to be very staid and boring, and certainly not one that would spark my interest if I came across it at a library, research facility etc. I realize, however, that changing the format of the newsletter comes at a cost financially, and that it may not be worth it given the trend towards electronic publications.
4. I am still in support of appointing state representatives to help scout for articles for the newsletter. This may help to broaden the spectrum of articles and make the newsletter more up-to-date.
5. I think that the newsletter would certainly benefit if there were a greater focus on people! I am always keen to hear about what people in and around the rangelands are doing – it's just difficult to find out!!

Summary

I have been pleased with the progress of the newsletter over the past year. I am very excited that the newsletter is now published on the ARS website, and I am hoping that we can capitalize on this heightened exposure by producing issues that are genuinely interesting to a range of readers.

Dr Noelene Duckett
Editor, *Range Management Newsletter*
15 September 2010