

# 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.

## 1. 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

## 2. Apologies

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

## 3. Minutes of Renmark meeting, 4 and 5 September 2006

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

## 4. Matters arising from Renmark minutes

### 4.1 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.**

### 4.2 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.**

### 4.3 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.**

### 4.4 Scanning of national and international conferences

No specific action reported.

- 4.5 Initiate and vet proposals for Special Issues

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

- 4.6 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.**

- 4.7 Survey of policy makers etc

Nothing to report.

- 4.8 Any other business

Nothing raised.

## **5. Minutes of Hohhot meeting, 4 and 5 September 2006**

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

## **6. 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.

## **7. Correspondence**

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

## **8. Business arising from correspondence**

None.

## **9. 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 15<sup>th</sup> 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**

### *Statistics as of 26 September 2008* **Subscriptions**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
ARS members					236	223	226	228
Full					61	85	79	81
Gifts/Exchanges					23	28	9	13
Total					319	336	314	321

\*As at September 2008.

### **Submissions**

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008*
Submitted			20	20	30	46	70	~52
Rejection rate (%)			30	35%	53%	50%	50%	~37%
Papers published			16	18	15	20	20	36
Pages published			197	250	168	210	222	~380

\*As of September 2008; refer to Editor's report.

## Impact factor and citation ranking (category Ecology, comprising 116 journals)

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
IF	0.250	0.484	0.706	0.625	0.621	0.400	0.545
CR	94	85	80	83	91	102	100

### Summary data for 2008:

Average time from submission to accept/reject/revise notification	~6-8 weeks
Average acceptance to publication time	~12 weeks

### Sources of submitted papers 2008

Year	Australia	NZ	North America	Europe	Asia	RoW	Total
2008	19	0	2	10	19*	2	52

\*Contains papers invited for the Grasslands and Rangelands of China Special Issue.

### Special issues published in this year

- **Desert Knowledge (Volume 30, Issue 1)**
- **Grasslands and Rangelands of China (Volume 30, Issue 2)**

### Web statistics

**Number of papers downloaded 2007 (jan.-dec.)**  
**18,050**

**Number of papers downloaded to 25 Sept 2008**  
**13,466**

**Early Alert subscribers to date in 2008** **620 (from**  
**32 countries)**

### Plans and targets for the next two years

- Invite submissions in selected areas - "i.e. Special Issues or Research Fronts"
- Publish a selection of research articles/reviews from the biennial ARS conference
- Publish Special Issues from "Desert Knowledge CRC" and "ILRI/IWMI" using invited Guest Editors.
- Increase submissions by 50% (~100 submission/year) and number of issues to 4.
- Establish the niche and special role of TRJ in publishing rangeland science.
- Look for new opportunities and generate new ideas for publishing excellent papers on rangeland science, and promoting the society (ARS).

**Editor:**

- Dr 'Wal' Whalley, Botany, The University of New England, Australia

#### **Associate Editors:**

- Dr Andrew Ash, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Australia
- Dr B. T. Bestelmeyer, New Mexico State University, USA
- Dr Brian Cooke, University of Canberra, Australia
- Associate Professor M. E. Fernandez-Gimenez, Colorado State University, USA
- Professor Ruijun Long, Lanzhou University, China
- Mr Neil Macleod, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Australia
- Dr 'Ben' Norton, Centre for the Management of Arid Environments, Australia
- Dr Mark Stafford-Smith, CSIRO Sustainable Ecosystems, Australia

#### **Conferences selected for promoting The Rangeland Journal:**

- "14th Australian Agronomy Conference" Adelaide sept08
- "A Climate for Change in the Rangelands" 15th ARS Conference, Charters Towers sept08
- "Fire Australia 2008" Sydney oct08
- "Frankfurt Book Fair" Frankfurt oct08
- "Nature Conservation Council of NSW - Biodiversity and Climate Change Conference Sydney nov08
- "Ecological Society Conference" Sydney dec08
- "Information Online" Sydney jan09
- "International Wildland Fire Management Conference - Facing our Future" Sydney june09
- "INTERCOL X" Brisbane aug09

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.

## 10. 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.