



The Australian Rangeland Society

2011 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Meeting #215

16 May 2011

37 Pioneer Crescent, Bellbowrie, Queensland, 4070

DRAFT MINUTES

1. Open meeting

The meeting was opened at 5.06 pm (EST).

Present were John Taylor, Carolyn Ireland, Peter Marin, Graeme Tupper, Kate Masters, Richard Silcock, Larissa Lauder, Marion Murphy, Peter Johnston, Annabel Walsh

2. Apologies

Ben Forsyth

Moved: John Taylor Seconded: Larissa Lauder

3. Minutes of the 2010 Annual General Meeting (Meeting #206)

The 2010 AGM was held on 20 May 2010. Carolyn Ireland moved that the minutes be received as a true and accurate reflection of the meeting. Seconded: Kate Masters, Carried.

There were no items arising from the minutes for discussion.

4. Directors' Report

The Financial Report for the year ended 31 December 2010, incorporating the Directors' Report, the Membership Report and the Publications Report was circulated prior to the meeting.

President John Taylor provided an outline of key issues in the Directors' Report (these are summarised as dot points on page 1 of the report).

2010 was a busy and productive year for the Society.

- In April, Dr Tony Pressland was appointed as an Associate Editor of The Rangeland Journal.
- At the AGM in May, Dr Peter Johnston resigned as President but remained on Council as a General Member. Dr John Taylor was elected as the new President of Council.
- In July, the Directors initiated an internal review of Corporate Governance.

- In July, Council initiated a review of membership categories and fees. This will be finalized next year.
- In July, Council developed Guidelines and a Template for Conference Proposals to clarify the information sought by Council in making decisions about endorsing and providing 'seed money' for future conferences.
- At a Special General Meeting held on 9 September, Members voted unanimously to lift the upper limit for number of Fellows of the ARS from 2% to 4% of membership, thus allowing Members to nominate new Fellows to the Society. Guidelines were revised, advertised and nominations sought.
- In September, the Society held a very successful Biennial Conference in Bourke NSW. An excellent 4-day program on the theme 'Rain in the Rangelands' attracted 217 participants.
- Also in September, Members from Western Australia made a successful bid to hold the 2012 Conference in Kununurra.
- In November, in response to a competition to attract producer members, Council awarded Leonard Nutt, a producer from the South Australian rangelands with a complimentary, one-year membership of the Society.
- At its November meeting Council approved a 1 year extension to the contract with CSIRO Publishing for printing and distribution of The Rangeland Journal (TRJ).
- In November, Professor Murray McGregor was appointed to the Publications Committee, and Council extended the term for a further 3 years for Associate Editors - Prof Maria Fernandez-Giminez, Mr Neil Macleod and Dr Brandon Bestelmeyer.
- In November, Council also endorsed a proposal to partner with CSIRO Publishing and Rangelands Australia in promoting Australian rangelands, the ARS and its publications, and the 2012 Conference at international meetings (eg.SRM, IRC) over the next two years. These would be attended by Council members in other roles. A banner, posters and flyers have been developed for use at these meetings.
- In December Council considered applications for Travel Grants and awarded grants to the following Members - Dr Peter O'Reagan, Bob Karfs, Bob Shepherd, Dr Carolyn Ireland and Christine Ferguson. Four of these grants were to assist with attendance at the IRC in Rosario, Argentina in April 2011.
- During the year a review of Honoraria was undertaken - it is proposed that this be finalised in the early part of 2011.
- Throughout the year, developments in the Global Rangelands Initiative and Repository were monitored, and a preliminary Council position on engagement with this initiative was developed towards the end of the year.
- Further improvements were made to the website in 2010.

Council met six times during 2010 and also held an Annual General Meeting on 20 May 2010. It also held a Special General Meeting on 9 September 2010 to amend the Articles of Association and a

General Meeting of Members at the Conference in Bourke in September. All meetings, other than the General Meeting, were held via teleconference.

The following were members of the ARS Council, and attended 0 meetings during 2010:

P Johnston (5)	President (January to May) / General Member
C Ireland (6)	Secretary
P Marin (4)	Finance and Audit Officer/Company Secretary
G Tupper (5)	Subscription Manager / General Member,
J Taylor (6)	General Member (President, May to December)
A Walsh (6)	General Member
L Lauder (5)	General Member
K Masters (5)	General Member

The President thanked those who, in addition to Council, fulfil vital roles for the Society in a voluntary role. These are:

Dr K Hodgkinson	Chair, Publication Committee
Dr RDB Whalley	Editor in Chief and Publication Committee
Dr N Duckett	Newsletter Editor and Publication Committee
Mr D Green	Bourke Conference Organising Committee
Mr R Grant	Bourke Conference Organising Committee
Dr A.J. Ash	Associate Editor
Dr R Long	Associate Editor
Dr B. Cooke	Associate Editor
Mr N.D. Macleod	Associate Editor
Dr M Stafford-Smith	Associate Editor
Prof M. Fernandez-Gimenez	Associate Editor
Dr B. Bestelmeyer	Associate Editor
Dr E Mwangi	Associate Editor
Professor B Hubert	Associate Editor
Dr John Milne	Associate Editor
Dr Tony Pressland	Associate Editor
Dr D.G. Burnside	Publications Committee
Ms K. Andrews	Publications Committee
Dr D.J. Eldridge	Publications Committee
Dr P.W. Johnston	Publications Committee
Prof. Murray McGregor	Publications Committee
Dr Jocelyn Davies	Publications Committee

In addition to these the President thanked Carolyn Ireland, the Secretary of the ARS, Peter Marin the Finance and Audit Officer and Graeme Tupper the Subscription Manager for their efforts on behalf of the Society.

Publications Report

The publishing and circulation of professional and highly regarded publications in the form of three newsletters and four journal issues per year to members continued under the guidance of the Publications Committee and their respective Editors and Associate Editors.

In 2010, the Society was in the final year of its second 3-year Publication Agreement with CSIRO Publishing to have *The Rangeland Journal* (TRJ) published both electronically and in hard-copy for the years 2008 - 2010 (Volumes 30, 31 and 32). A one-year extension to the contract (to publish Volume 33) has been negotiated for 2011. The TRJ continued to be made available in hard copy and electronic form to members in categories other than Libraries and kindred institutions. The latter two categories may receive TRJ in electronic form only, or, at a premium subscription rate, electronic form plus print. The *Range Management Newsletter* continues to be published in hard copy form and has recently commenced in electronic form via the Society's new website. CSIRO Publishing specifically promoted TRJ at six national and nine international conferences in 2010, and in various mailouts and inserts as part of their regular renewal campaigns.

Although the cost of electronic publication is greater than that by conventional means, Council is still of the opinion that this change was necessary if the Society is to persist as a vital body capable of providing impartial advice and opinion for policy makers and the community generally on rangelands and their use. It is pleasing to note the number of high quality papers submitted to TRJ continues to increase following the publication of the first Issue by CSIRO Publications in 2005. In 2010, 83 manuscripts were received (51 % from Australia). This is similar to the total number of papers received in 2009 (86). The continued high submission rate in 2010 indicates increased confidence / interest in the journal.

The Publications Committee continued to revise and expand the list of topics covered by the Journal with an increasing emphasis on the impact of social aspects on rangeland management. The Committee also decided to include a colour photograph on the front cover of the Journal, selected by the Editor-in-Chief from images submitted by authors during the year. Volume 32, Issue 3 was the first issue with a colour photograph on the cover.

The Journal has a significant web presence on the CSIRO publishing site. Archival back content (all Volumes to date) has been made available to all subscribers. The back content has been downloaded at an increasing rate with the 'most read' papers and Special Issues attracting the highest number of downloads. In 2010 the TRJ web site was well utilised with a continued increase in the number of subscribers accessing the site. Individual TRJ papers have been downloaded 28,739 times in 2010 (this represents a 19% increase over the number of paper downloads recorded for 2009), at a rate of approximately 79 individual papers per day. The most read paper in 2010 with 348 downloads was "*From the other side of the knowledge frontier: Indigenous knowledge, social-ecological relationships and new perspectives*" by Cameron Muir, Deborah Rose and Phillip Sullivan, published in Volume 32 (3) 4 September 2010.

The ISI Citation Impact Factor is based on a narrow window of citation and is reported in June each year. The Impact Factor for a given year is based on the ratio of citations to papers published in the previous 2 years. The Citation Impact Factor for 2009 was 1.164, compared with 1.232 for 2008. To date TRJ has about 60 citations and 42 papers published which gives an "indicative 2010 impact factor" of about 1.380. This means that the Journal has maintained its strong profile in the research community while consolidating the content to 4 regular issues over the citation periods. The 2009 Citation Impact Factor places the Journal in rank 84th out of 129 journals listed in the Ecology category - this rank is similar to that achieved in the previous year. The steady rise in the Impact Factor (from 2008 to 2010) is directly related to publication of 'high impact' papers, rigorous reviewing and 'active encouragement' for readers to cite papers. (NOTE: More details on publication matters are available from Council in the report from Chris Anderson from CSIRO Publishing.)

Other highlights for the journal included two special issues published in 2010. The first (Volume 32, Issue 1) was sponsored by the Desert Knowledge CRC focused on developing a better understanding

of the impact of feral camels on rangeland communities and was entitled "Managing the Impacts of Feral Camels". Australia is the only country in the world with a population of feral camels and so this was a ground-breaking Special Issue. It comprised 12 papers as well as a Guest Editorial by Prof Murray MacGregor and Glenn Edwards - the two Guest Editors. The second special issue (Volume 32, Issue 3) contained a selection of papers from the 2009 Workshop "Wetlands in Drylands" held in Canberra. The title of the journal Special Issue was "Linking the dynamics of people, land and water in the drylands of the Murray-Darling Basin" with Dr Sarah Ryan as the guest editor. These Special Issues have attracted considerable interest from 'rangeland' ecologists worldwide who may not be familiar with the Journal. Two special issues are also planned for 2011.

The Society's new website has continued to develop during 2010. The site now provides both members and the general public with a wider range of information and services. The *Range Management Newsletter* is now available to members in electronic format through the members section of the site.

Council would like to thank Dr Ken Hodgkinson and the Publications Committee for driving the changes to the Society's publications. These changes commenced with a major focus on *The Rangeland Journal*. Ken has subsequently focused on the web site which is also now complete and a major communication tool for the Society. Now that the *Range Management Newsletter* is available electronically Ken and Dr Noelene Duckett will focus on how this publication can be improved. The President also thanked Prof Wal Whalley for his tireless efforts as Editor-in-Chief of *The Rangeland Journal*.

Biennial Conference

The biennial conference is a significant event in the Society's calendar and provides the main mechanism for members and guests to interact and exchange ideas about the use and management of Australia's rangelands.

In September 2010, the Society held a successful conference on the theme 'Rain in the Rangelands' in Bourke, NSW. A total of 217 delegates registered for the four-day conference, attending field tours and eight conference sessions which included nine keynote presentations, forty other oral papers, and approximately 32 posters. Conference evaluation forms were overwhelmingly positive. The president expressed Council's appreciation of Russel Grant and Daryl Green, members of the Organising Committee.

Organisation is well underway for the next conference, in Kununurra WA in September 2012. The theme "*Celebrating Diversity: People, Places, Purpose*" is quite topical.

Membership Report

Membership of the Society has remained more or less stable at around 350-400 members since 2002.

In December 2010 there were 306 members managed by the Society with CSIRO Publishing managing another 79, giving a total of 385. The corresponding figures for December 2009 were 273 plus 83 (=356), December 2008 were 302 plus 83 (=385), December 2007, 303 plus 84 (=387), December 2006, 351 plus 75 (=426) and for December 2005, 321 plus 61 (=382). This compares with 438 in 2004, 434 in 2003 and 427 in December 2002.

There has been a slow but steady growth in new members over time. There were 84 new members in 2010 (a conference year), 19 new members in 2009, 70 new members in 2008 (a conference year), 23 new members in 2007, 41 new members in 2006 (a conference year) and 30 new members in 2005.

However, the trend in new memberships is negated by losses through retirements, a trend which will only intensify as the population of rangeland advisers and scientists ages and retires. Council has approved a presence at major international range-related events in an effort to grow the membership.

The majority (92%) of members and subscribers come from Australia, with 53% of these coming from Queensland and New South Wales. There were 23 international members (plus 39 international subscribers), compared to 20 at the same time in 2009, 15 at the same time in 2008 and 7 at the same time in 2007.

The membership figures include four ARS Fellows and ten "ex-officio" non-paying members such as the ARS archive, the National Library of Australia, and international Associate Editors for *The Rangeland Journal*. It is also noted that the Society has about 35 landholder addresses amongst its members.

Subscription rates for those subscribers managed by the Society increased for 2010 (eg. from \$85 to \$100 for Full Members resident in Australia), following the previous increase in 2006. On-line membership renewal became available to members through the Society's new website commencing in 2010. While this was intended to make it easier to renew memberships, a significant drop in renewals was noted following the introduction of this system.

As well as publishing *The Rangeland Journal*, CSIRO Publishing manages subscriptions for the Society's "Library" subscribers as well as some of its "Institutional/ Corporate" subscribers. Mailing labels were prepared for 79 CSIRO subscribers for the last Newsletter of 2010.

The President thanked the Subscription Manager, Graeme Tupper for his work during the year.

Graeme Tupper moved that the Directors' Report for the year ending 31 December 2010 be accepted. Seconded: Peter Johnston. Carried.

5. Financial Report

The financial affairs of the Society remain on a strong footing despite a loss from ordinary activities of \$32,792 (2009: profit of \$17,952) and total equity/accumulated surplus of \$282,424 (2009: \$315,216).

Professionally run biennial conferences continue to have a positive impact on the Society's financial position and the 2010 conference was no exception in delivering an approximate \$16,000 surplus for the Society. This is not reflected in the 2010 financials as sponsorship money for the conference was also received in the 2009 financial year.

The Society's total equity is \$282,424 which is considered adequate to cover any liabilities. The Society continued to work on improvements to programs and protocols to allow it to complete its commitments to standard reporting of its financial position as required under law.

Two questions were raised at the end of the financial report by ARS Member Marion Murphy.

1. Should the Society employ a bookkeeper to in order to negate a perceived conflict of interest with the Finance and Audit Officer keeping the accounts? Peter Marin replied that this was under investigation and that he was preparing a report to Council with a view to hiring someone soon.

2. She asked why the Society had a reserve of approximately \$280K and if Council had a strategy to spend this money? John replied that although Council believed it needed a healthy reserve he would put this forward as an agenda item for the next Council Meeting in late July.

Carolyn Ireland moved that the Financial Report for the year ending 31 December 2010 be accepted. Seconded: Larissa Lauder. Carried.

6. Election of Office Bearers

Section 16 of the Articles of Association of the Society provide for elections in each alternate year beginning in 1983 commencing at the end of the next Annual General Meeting. Positions are held for 4 years. The officers of the Society are President, Finance and Audit Officer, Secretary and up to five General Council Members. Accordingly nominations are called for six of these positions for a term of four years as set out in the Articles.

President	John Taylor – nominated as President
Secretary	Carolyn Ireland
Finance and Audit Officer	Peter Marin – nominated as Finance and Audit Officer
General Council Members	Annabel Walsh – nominated as General Council Member Graeme Tupper – nominated as General Council Member Peter Johnston – will retire Kate Masters – nominated as General Council Member Larissa Lauder

Ben Forsythe – nominated as a new General Council Member

Larissa Lauder moved that the above nominations be accepted. Seconded: Richard Silcock. Carried.

7. Motions on notice

Solvency resolution

'That the Directors have reason to believe that the Australian Rangeland Society Ltd will be able to pay its debts as and when they become due and payable.'

Moved: Larissa Lauder. Seconded: Kate Master. Carried.

8. Other motions

Change of Directors

As part of the regular rotation of Council members, the AGM will be asked to formally accept resignations of existing Directors and the Company Secretary and appoint new officers. John Taylor, Carolyn Ireland and Peter Marin have nominated as Directors, John Taylor has nominated as President and Peter Marin has also nominated as Finance and Audit Officer and Company Secretary.

Peter Johnston moved 'That the nominations of John Taylor, Carolyn Ireland and Peter Marin as Directors of The Australian Rangeland Society Ltd be accepted and that the nominations of John Taylor as President and of Peter Marin for Finance and Audit Offer and Company Secretary of the Australian Rangeland Society Ltd be accepted.' Seconded: Richard Silcock. Carried.

9. General business

- The President stated that it gave him great pleasure to announce that Dr Ken Hodgkinson and Prof Wal Whalley have been awarded Fellowships of the Society. Citations will be placed in the Range Management Newsletter and formal presentations will be made at the 2012 Kununurra Conference.
- OHS package for the Kununurra Conference. It was proposed that this be accepted. Moved Larissa, Lauder, Seconded Annabel Walsh, Carried
- Seed Capital of \$30K to Kununurra Committee. It was proposed that this be approved. Moved Annabel Seconded Kate Masters, Carried
- Global Rangelands Repository. Draft letter to Global Rangelands Project Leader approved subject to being checked by Ken Hodgkinson and the Publications Committee. Peter Johnston agreed with the letter. Moved by Carolyn Ireland subject to Pub Com confirmation: Seconded Annabel Walsh, Carried.
- Marion Murphy asked that Council looks at how it can separate the role of Treasurer and Finance and Audit Officer.
- Marion Murphy moved a Motion: That “the Council develop a strategy to use the cash reserves to further the objectives of the Society and grow membership” Seconded Larissa Lauder. Carried

10. Close meeting

The President thanked Peter Johnston on his retirement as Past President and General Member. He thanked those present for their participation and attendance, and closed the meeting at 6.12 pm (EST).