



The Australian Rangeland Society

Council Meeting No. 257

MINUTES

5 pm QLD Time – Wednesday 29 March 2017 by Teleconference

1. **Present:** David Phelps (Chair), Don Burnside, Carol Ireland, Cathy Waters (until 6 pm), Andrew Ash
Guest: Bob Shepherd

Apologies: Dionne Walsh, Gus Whyte, Megan Munchenberg

2. **Minutes of the previous meeting:** Minutes of Council Meeting 256 on Wednesday 25 January 2017 held by teleconference were approved. **Moved:** Don, **Seconded:** Andrew, **Carried**

3. **Business arising from the minutes:**

A. Strategic Plan (David).

- Leave on Agenda until at least September 2017
- Planning to take place in person the day after the Pt Augusta conference

B. Port Augusta 2017 Conference (Carol/ Don)

- All going well, Lisa Pearson is excellent PCO, all venue and social aspects arranged
- Portal for abstracts is very good and easy for reviewers to use
- Abstracts are all in and decisions about speakers will be made by the Program Committee on April 13
- Keynote speakers are all in place
- Tours are being organized
- Budget with projected surplus of \$20,000
- Organising Committee now meeting monthly, with the next meeting (April 2) as a face-to-face meeting in Port Augusta

Action: Don and Carol to keep Council informed

Action: Carol to invite Publications Committee to September Council Meeting

Action: Carol to request meeting rooms for above meeting and Strategic Planning Meeting

C. Succession Planning for a new Secretary (Carol)

- Bob Shepherd and Carol will meet in Adelaide on 12 April. A date for the actual handover will be decided.
Item closed

D. "Creating a Modern Outback Forum" (David)

- Barry Traill of PEW has agreed to write an article for RMN.
- Item closed

E. Proposed bid for the 2024 IRC (David)

- Leave this item on the Agenda

F. TRJ Contract extension. To remain on Agenda until later this year.

- **See Publication Committee Report 4 C.**

G. International Year of Rangelands and Pastoralists (David)

- John Taylor, David Phelps and Dana Kelly have discussed the issue of spreading people too thin, and possibly risking an ARS bid for the 2024 IRC. It was decided that it more likely to work the other way and set us up for the IRC bid in terms of experience, contacts and possible sponsors. The sub-committee now have a much better understanding of the process thanks to Dana visiting senior policy advisors to Barnaby Joyce. The committee will prepare a briefing note ready for a push via grazier networks (e.g. Gus Whyte, Peter Douglass or Rick Britton to initiate talks with Barnaby Joyce). There will, however, be no Federal Funding – budget will have to come from private sponsors.

Action: Dana, David and John to expand the subcommittee with possibly Sally Leigo and Nicole Spiegel.

Action: David, Dana and John to write a briefing note

H. Council Sponsorship Subcommittee (Andrew and Dionne)

- Potential sponsorship from Federal Department of Agriculture and MLA
- Leave this on the Agenda for future Conferences and other opportunities for funding

I. Less expensive conference calls (Dionne/Andrew)

- Webex can handle 25 attendees for \$68/month and unlimited VoIP calls. They will provide a free trial for 14 days.

Action: Will evaluate Webex as a free trial in 2017. Andrew to organize.

J. New Fellows

- Proposal to nominate Ron Hacker as a Fellow of the Society (Don)

Motion: That Ron Hacker be awarded a Fellowship of the Society **Moved:** Don:

Seconded: Cathy, **Unanimously Approved by Council**

Action: David to send citation to Ron to correct minor errors before it goes on the website, RMN and social media

Action: David to write to Ron with the news

Action: All Members to suggest one more Fellow

4. General business:

(a) Membership

ARS membership at 22 March 2017

Category	Hardcopy Journal + RMN	E-journal + RMN	RMN only	Total
Standard	99* (70**)	33* (25**)	11* (9**)	143* (104**)
Concession	14 (11)	5 (4)	2 (2)	21 (17)
Student	3 (1)	1 (1)	2 (1)	6 (3)
Company	3 (3)	3 (3)	0 (0)	6 (6)
Complimentary***	6 (6)	23 (23)	0 (0)	29*** (29)
Institutional subscribers****	11	79	0	90
Total	136 (102)	144 (135)	15 (12)	295 (249)

* Total number of members to pay in 2017

** number already paid in 2017

*** There are 35 complimentary members, but 6 of these have volunteered membership subs for 2017.

**** institutional subscribers are not ARS members and pay subs direct to CSIRO

As at 22 March 2017

201 people and institutional subscribers have renewed for 2017

19 renewed for 2017-2019

220 people and institutional subscribers renewed in total

46 people who were members in 2016 still to renew

Action: Don to write a new reminder to say that the rise in fees will not happen until the end of April instead of the end of March

Action: Membership will be a discussion point for the Council Meeting at the Conference

b) Finance – Report from Don Burnside

Financial report to 23 March 2017 circulated by Don.

INCOME	Actual Jan 1 to Mar 23 (GST excl)	Comments
Total ARS Membership Income	\$13,682	total membership payments for 2017 = \$19,495
Total Conference income	\$4,818	
Copyright Income		
Interest income	\$99	
TOTAL INCOME	\$18,599	
EXPENSES		
Bank service charges	\$315	
Membership management	\$2,500	Subscription Manager 2016 honorarium
Marketing and promotion (website, travel grants, social media set-up)	\$1,680	includes \$1,500 for website manager 2016 honorarium
Conference expenses	\$903	
Council costs	\$1,641	mainly Chorus Call
Corporate costs	\$47	ASIC fees
TOTAL EXPENSES	\$7,086	
PROFIT/ LOSS	\$11,513	

Balance of Accounts at 23 March 2017	
	actual
Operating Cheque Account 8347	\$100
Conference Account 8363	\$5,391
Savings Account 8721	\$92,372
Membership Account 3504	\$519
Journal account	\$193
Petty cash conference	\$500
Total cash	\$99,075.39
Outstanding accounts receivable and payable	
Tax payable	-\$16,028.63
Net assets	\$115,104.02

Moved: By Don to accept the financial report. **Seconded,** Carol. **Carried.**

c) Publications Committee – Report from Ron Hacker

The Publications Committee met on 15 March 2017. Matters for Council consideration arising from this meeting, and subsequent developments, are as follows:

1. THE RANGELAND JOURNAL

Issue 1 of 2017 has been distributed (101 pages) and nine papers have been accepted for issue 2. The Production Editor in CSIRO Publishing has indicated that he would prefer (apparently for logistical reasons) not to publish special issues consecutively (as occurred in 2016). The Editor-in-Chief and

Guest Editors will try to ensure that the special issues planned for 2017 (Mongolian grasslands climate change response and 'Restore, Regenerate, Revegetate' conference) are published as issues 4 and 6. However, CSIRO Publishing has been advised that the length of time required to bring the Chinese papers to an acceptable standard may mean that it will slip to issue 5.

A special issue on northern development is in the planning stages for 2018 and Andrew Ash will be seeking funding support from the Office of Northern Australia.

Tenders for the new publishing contract closed at the end of February. Tenders have been received from CSIRO Publishing, Wiley and SAGE Publishing. These have been circulated to PC members together with summaries of each against the criteria listed in the Information Package. Committee members had until COB Friday 24 March to return comments to me before consideration of the tenders moved into the sub-committee stage. No comment has been received beyond some opinions expressed when the tenders were received and initially circulated. A meeting of the sub-committee (Hacker, Burnside, Novelty, Whalley, Phelps) will now be called as soon as possible to consider the tenders and make a recommendation, initially to the PC and then to Council. It would be desirable to have this process completed by the end of April and this will therefore require out-of-session consideration by both PC and Council.

The PC moved to recommend to Council the appointment of Dr Ann Waters-Bayer as an Associate Editor in a continuing effort to increase the number of AEs and reduce the burden on some individuals. Dr Waters-Bayer is well known in international rangeland development circles and will be able to provide expertise in a number of aspects of the journals current topic list including the broad headings of 'social-economic-ecological systems', 'utilisation and management of resources' and 'conservation of biological and cultural heritage'. Dr Waters-Bayer is currently an Advisory Editor of the journal but the PC has previously agreed that this should not prevent her appointment as an Associate Editor. She has indicated that she would accept an appointment. Her CV is attached in part (Appendix 1; note that a further 16 pages of publications have been omitted).

Recommendation 1. That Council appoint Dr Ann Waters-Bayer as an Associate Editor of The Rangeland Journal for the usual three year term (from a specific date) and on the usual conditions, and that the President convey this offer to Dr Waters-Bayer (waters-bayer@web.de).

Moved: Carolyn, **Seconded:** Don, **Carried**

Action: David to write to Ann to confirm

The publisher's annual report for 2016 was received in early March and has been forward separately. The report is generally optimistic showing a small increase in the Impact Factor (from 1.096 to 1.194) but with prospects for increasing the IF to >2. The two Special Issue published in 2016, particularly the feral camel issue, are being widely cited. Three papers from this issue have received Highly Cited Paper awards from Web of Science. This should increase the Impact Factor for 2017 and 2018. Papers included in the journals first 'virtual issue', produced in 2016, were downloaded at five times the rate of other papers. The importance for the journal's profile of high quality Special Issues and virtual Issues on particular themes is emphasized.

2. RANGE MANAGEMENT NEWSLETTER

The first issue of the RMN for 2017 has been posted on-line in keeping with requirements regarding the announcement of the Society's AGM.

Noelene Duckett has now loaded all of the RMN archives onto the web site, including all issues of the RMN's predecessor the Range Assessment Newsletter dating from 1974. Noelene has offered to construct a master list of articles so that specific articles can be readily discovered and accessed. I expect that this will have been loaded by the time of my next report. These archives are available to the general public, with only the current issue of the newsletter confined to the Members Area.

3. WEB SITE

The web site is currently serving as the web portal for the 19th Biennial Conference, the first conference for which this capacity has been used. The conference page is being managed by the conference organisers who have administrator's access to this part of the site. Camilla Osborn is currently updating the 'Resources' page which provides links to other rangeland-related sites. Any

input from Council members in the form of links to additional sites and a brief description of their content would be appreciated.

The next major project for web development will be to complete the Biennial Conference archives. Most of the conference proceedings and/or individual papers are already available from either the ARS site or the Global Rangelands site but there are some gaps. Ideally we would like to have both the full conference proceedings (single file) and the individual papers all on the ARS site. This is currently a work in progress and I am in liaison with Camilla to determine what needs to be done.

4. SOCIAL MEDIA

The Society's reach on social media is continuing to grow steadily. Amber Marshall's quarterly report (to the end of February) indicates 683 Facebook likes and 749 followers on Twitter. (Instagram does not provide similar statistics). The tone of all feedback reflects a positive sentiment. During the reporting period an average of three Facebook posts have been made each week and 30 tweets in total were posted. Our social media presence extends well beyond Society membership, as the above figures indicate. The top post on Facebook during the period (Notice of ARS study and travel grants) reached 1,466 individuals; the second most popular post (Appointment of Margaret Friedel as a Fellow) reached 1,444 individuals. The arrangement with Wright Social to provide one topical Facebook post per week (providing a basis for at least one Twitter post per week) is working well and is partially responsible for the favourable position reported.

The PC noted that the material posted on social media tends to be biased towards conservation/biodiversity topics and that a better balance of material would be desirable (e.g. more posts with a pastoral, mining or tourism theme). Amber has undertaken to address this issue.

5. VACANCIES ON THE PUBLICATIONS COMMITTEE

There are currently two vacancies on the PC (vice Ken Hodgkinson and Steve Blake). At the PC's direction I have approached Dr Jennifer Silcock to ascertain her interest in an appointment and she has responded favourably. The PC therefore recommends her appointment to Council. Her CV is attached (Appendix 2).

Recommendation 2. That Council appoint Dr Jennifer Silcock as a member of the Publications Committee for the usual three year term (from a specific date) and on the usual conditions, and that the President convey this offer to Dr Silcock (j.silcock@uq.edu.au).

Moved: Carolyn, **Seconded:** Don, **Carried**

Action: David to write Jen to confirm

Council accepted the Publications Committee Report. **Moved:** Carol, **Seconded:** Gus, **Carried.**

Action: David to inform Ron that the Recommendations were approved

5 New business:

A. Confidential Report from John Taylor re: SRM Meeting in the USA

The SRM work closely with students, have rancher members and use publications to generate income. The report led to discussion if the ARS is hitting the mark with our RMN for landholders or NRM bodies (e.g. an edition profiling a property – use a good rural reporter) and if social media needs to be more targeted to landholders. However, need to balance all sectors in the rangelands. This report will help with our Strategic Plan.

Action: the details of the report are to remain confidential and are only to assist Council for improving ARS strategic planning.

B. Reminder about bids for the 2019 ARS Biennial Conference

Action: Don to contact Ken Hodgkinson about the possibility of holding it in Canberra

C. The AGM on Monday May 22 2017

Discussion followed re: procedure

6. Correspondence:

INCOMING

08-Feb-17	Email	Bob Shepherd	Nominating as Secretary and Member of ARS Council
08-Feb-17	Letter	QLD Minister Bob Byrne	Declaring his support for the the IY of Rangelands & Pastoralists
22-Feb-17	Letter	Richard Downward	Cheque for Subs and nice words for President David
28-Feb-17	Letter	QLD Minister Dr Steven Miles	Declaring his support for the the IY of Rangelands & Pastoralists
14-Feb-17	Email	Camilla Osborne	Confirming various document posted to the Website
17-Mar-17	Email	Wal Whalley	Updating access to website
21-Mar-17	Email	Lisa Pearson	Clarifying student access to grants for Conference

OUTGOING

01-Feb-17	Letter	Amber Marshal	Letter of support from David Phelps, President ARS
06-Feb-17	Email	Bob Shepherd/Amber	Quad Bikes and Kids Program
06-Feb-17	Email	Camilla Osborne	Requesting various document be posted to the Website
13-Mar-17	Email	Hossein Harzani	Acknowledging receipt of Membership
16-Mar-17	Email	Wal Whalley	Requesting help with access to website
21-Mar-17	Email	Lisa Pearson	Clarifying student access to grants for Conference

7. The next meeting of Council will be the AGM by teleconference at 5 pm Queensland time on Monday 22 May 2017

OTHER MEETINGS FOR 2017

Wednesday July 26 (Council Meeting by Teleconference) 5 pm QLD time
Wednesday September 27 (Council Meeting at the Conference) time to be decided
Thursday September 28 (General Meeting of Society Members at the Conference) 7.30 am SA time
Friday September 29 (Strategic Planning Meeting after the Conference) time to be decided
Wednesday December 6 (Council Meeting by Teleconference) 5 pm QLD time