

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

**Meeting on Wednesday, 27 March, 2019  
by teleconference**

**MINUTES**

Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 6.03 pm (EDST).

1. **Present:** Ron Hacker (Chair), Don Burnside, Wal Whalley, Russell Grant, Paul Novelly, Noelene Duckett, David Eldridge, Andrew Ash
2. **Apologies:** Jen Silcock, Daryl Green, Sarah Moles
3. **Additional items for general business:**  
Nil
4. **Minutes of the previous meeting – 6 February, 2019**  
Add Andrew Ash to the list of the members present.  
**Motion:** That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 6 February, 2019 be accepted as circulated.  
Moved: Don Burnside; Seconded: Wal Whalley. Carried.
5. **Matters arising from previous minutes (not listed as specific agenda items)**  
None raised.
6. **The Rangeland Journal**

6.1. *Report from Editor-in-Chief*

Paul Novelly reported verbally. Issue 1 of volume 41 published at the end of February 2019. Only 14 submissions so far this calendar year which is down on 2018 but comparable to 2017; six papers are currently back with authors for revision and four are accepted for Issue 2 (normal issue). Quality of submissions is a concern based on submissions so far this year.

Tony Pressland has helped with the English on one overseas paper and was duly acknowledged in the manuscript. This is the first time assistance has been provided by the English language editing group set up in 2018; the process seems to work well based on this one experience.

6.2. *Performance of Associate Editors*

Ron and Paul have discussed the issue and developed a process for handling the particular situation.

6.3. *Special issues (SIs)*

6.3.1. *2017 Biennial Conference (Don Burnside)*

Seven papers accepted, with one other paper close to being accepted but it is somewhat delayed because of the travel by the author. One other paper (Foran et al.) is currently with reviewers after revision and should be accepted soon. The Sparrow manuscript has considerable work to be done on it but there has been little progress in re-working it. Mark Howden paper will not be submitted. The plan is for the Special Issue to come out in July. It was agreed that any

papers not accepted by the EIC by June 30, 2019 will not be published in the Special Issue.

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

The contract is now with Legal in NSW DPI. No problems expected with the contract processing. A number of papers are in preparation. Manuscripts are due by April 30, 2019 but this is unlikely to be met. Payment will be made this financial year.

*6.3.3. Other possibilities (Ecological degradation and regeneration of grasslands; drought policy; others)*

Ecological degradation proposal from China has not yet been received. CSIRO Publishing is following up with Professor Hu in China.

Drought management and policy – interest from the Drought and Climate Adaptation Program in the Qld Govt. (Neil Cliffe).

**Action:** Andrew Ash to continue to follow-up with Neil Cliffe.

Wambiana special issue still a possibility but it probably won't occur until 2020-2021. Paul has some concerns about getting this issue done in a timely fashion.

*6.3.4. Process for identifying Special Issues*

Ron doesn't believe the current ad hoc process is sustainable with members of the PC taking the lead as Guest Editors in recent times. Ron raised the notion of a group of people tasked with driving the development of Special Issue topics. Don suggested putting a call out via the RMN for ARS members to contribute to SI topics. Paul suggested a sub-committee of the PC to develop the process and guidelines to underpin a wider group tasked with progressing Special Issues. Paul indicated he would be happy to chair the sub-committee (Paul + a couple of PC members) to develop the process and guidelines.

**Action:** Paul Novelly, Wal Whalley, and Ron Hacker to form this sub-committee.

**Action:** Don to draft a short article for the RMN to seek interest from ARS members.

*6.4. Possible commissioned papers*

*6.4.1. Grazing management of southern Australian rangelands (Don Burnside)*

Don will raise it at a Council meeting on April 10.

*6.4.2. 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Westoby et al. (state and transition concept) (Ron/David)*

An invited paper from Mark Westoby won't progress as he hasn't got time to do it.

*6.5. Update of flyer*

Correspondence with Jenny Foster on this issue has been circulated to PC members. The new flyer will be progressed in June when the 2018 Impact Factor is available.

*6.6. Citation of Australian literature in non-Australian papers*

Andrew raised a concern that some international papers are not covering relevant international literature, especially from Australia, and suggested

that authors through the review process be asked to cover the literature more thoroughly. Paul Novelly disagreed with the proposal of targeting the inclusion of Australian literature. It was agreed that the instructions to authors be reinforced to ensure appropriate coverage of relevant literature.

**Action:** Paul Novelly to follow-up with CSIRO Publishing.

## 7. Range Management Newsletter

### 7.1. Report from Editor

March newsletter should be published in the next week.

### 7.2. Implementation of the Council resolution regarding the Newsletter

Noelene outlined the key actions/recommendations from Council in response to the discussion paper on the RMN submitted by the PC.

1. The name and format of the RMN remain unchanged;
2. Titles of papers from biennial conferences should be published in RMN, with links to the articles on the web site; it is not necessary to include abstracts;
3. Efforts should be made to attract 'lay summaries' (generally about one page, including pictures) of papers appearing in The Rangeland Journal, setting out the practical implications of the work in lay language.
4. Formal reciprocal arrangements should be established with a range of other newsletters to share content;
5. Opinion pieces should be sought from appropriate individuals relating to topical rangeland issues, both nationally and internationally;
6. The policy of embargoing the current issue until the next issue is produced should be maintained; a pay-per-view option for the current issue is not recommended;
7. The resources available to produce the RMN should, as required, be expanded to include

- An Editorial Assistant (responsible for assisting to solicit lay summaries and monitoring of partner newsletters)
- State correspondents (responsible for identifying topical issues and soliciting opinion pieces, in conjunction with the Editor) to be trialled for 12 months, then reviewed.
- Input from Advisory Editors (who would be asked to perform a role equivalent to State correspondents at the international level)

Ron indicated that the list of newsletters provided by Council for possible reciprocal arrangements is very long and that some targeting is required. Ron has previously approached a number of organisations on the list regarding the possibility of reciprocal arrangements and mostly positive responses were received. Noelene asked about the process for linking to articles in other newsletters and it was agreed it would just require a short description of the content or context of the article followed by the link to it.

**Action:** Noelene to coordinate the implementation of the agreed actions from Council.

## **8. Social Media**

### *8.1. Report from Social Media Editor*

Sarah provided a brief written report prior to the meeting. Things progressing well. A couple of re-tweets attracted considerable interest. Sarah's appointment has been confirmed for the full three year term following a review by Ron, as required by the terms of her appointment.

## **9. ARS web site**

### *9.1. Report from Editor*

Russell reported that given the website turmoil, minimum maintenance has been done. Essential new items are being uploaded. Still no responses from ZymZen. Russell is having some trouble getting information from the Conference Organising Committee to upload to the website.

### *9.2. Update on tender process*

Tenders were received from three companies. Blue Platypus has made a static copy of the website, at a cost of \$220, which secures the content but does not include any functionality. Blue Platypus is the preferred tenderer and the other two tenderers have each been notified that their tender was unsuccessful.

Following a discussion with David Phelps, Ron provided a series of questions to Blue Platypus about the functionality included in their tender. Questions were developed from advice from site administrators, conference organising committees for both the Canberra and Port Augusta conferences, and David Phelps. Ron has subsequently gone through these questions on the phone with Blue Platypus (Tanya Bellchambers). All the functionality required will be available. There will be additional costs for updates to conference pages and to ensure archival material is searchable (library function). Tanya has indicated that Wordpress is a different platform which means that we may need to do some things differently. Ron advised that the written response to the questions had just been received from Tanya and would be circulated.

## **10. General Business**

### *10.1. Annual report contributions*

Don will be requesting information for the Annual Report in the next few days from Ron, Noelene, Sarah and Russell.

### *10.2 Minutes Secretary for PC*

Ron indicated that it would be preferable to have a dedicated Minutes secretary. It was agreed that we would continue with the present casual arrangement.

## **11. Date of future meetings**

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

Meeting closed at 7.30 pm.