

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

**Meeting on Wednesday, 18 March 2020  
by teleconference**

**MINUTES**

Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 6.01 pm (AEDT).

**1. Present:**

Ron Hacker (Chair), Don Burnside, Russell Grant, Paul Novelly, Andrew Ash, Sarah Moles, Noelene Duckett, Daryl Green

**2. Apologies:**

Jen Silcock

**3. Additional items for general business:**

Nil

**4. Minutes of the previous meeting – 29 January 2020**

**Motion:** That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 29 January 2020 be accepted as circulated.

Moved: Don Burnside; Seconded: Paul Novelly. Carried.

**5. Matters arising from previous minutes (not listed as specific agenda items)**

Nil.

**6. The Rangeland Journal**

*6.1. Report from Editor-in-Chief*

Paul Novelly reported verbally.

Eighteen (18) volunteered manuscripts received in 2020 to date, and they come from a good geographical spread. Of these 11 are in review, 6 were rejected and 1 has been accepted. In addition there are 38 papers submitted in 2019 currently in review. Managing timelines continues to be difficult, with both Australian and external Associate Editors having difficulty obtaining referees and achieving timely turnaround of manuscripts.

Issue 1/Vol 42 is getting close (5 papers accepted), but more papers needed.

The first paper has been delivered for the ARS2019 Special Issue and the Walker and Westoby introduction for the next Virtual Issue is proceeding through the system. (This is one of the 18 papers noted above). No papers have yet been received from China for the special issue on *Ecological Degradation and Regeneration of Grasslands*.

Concern expressed that the web site 'Beef Central' referred to a recently accepted paper in TRJ as being from 'CSIRO's *Rangeland Journal*'.

**Action:** Paul Novelly to advise Beef Central of their mistake, and PC to consider how TRJ can be better badged to show that it is an ARS publication.

*6.2. Special issues (SIs)*

*6.2.1. Management of Total Grazing Pressure in the Southern Rangelands (Ron Hacker)*

This SI is being edited by Ron Hacker, Katrina Sinclair and Lester Pahl. All but ready for publication, comprising 10 papers and 130 pages. The Issue will be No 6, Vol 41. Volume 41 will conclude with 586 pages.

*6.2.2. Drought Management and Policy (Andrew Ash)*

Nine papers are being prepared. Andrew will follow up Linda Bottrell for a paper on National Drought Policy, and Jacqui Willcocks will follow up a paper from NSW with Cathy Waters. Submission date has been set for mid-April

**Action:** Andrew Ash to determine when QDAF needs to be invoiced for the Special Issue.

*6.2.3. Ecological Degradation and Regeneration of Grasslands – China (Paul Novelly)*

The contract was forwarded to Professor Lui on 27 December 2019. Signature has been delayed by travel restrictions due to the Coronavirus (signatures from three universities are required) but Ron Hacker was advised today that the contract would be signed as soon as possible once restrictions are lifted.

*6.2.4. Special Issue from ARS 2019 Canberra (Paul Novelly)*

A proposal was forwarded by Mark Stafford Smith and approved 10 February 2020. All protocols are in place including identification of the types of papers that will be accepted so that Guest Editors and reviewers are in no doubt that particular formats are acceptable. Funding support has been obtained from ACIAR who will fund 5 papers (\$5,000) and pay for these to be open access (\$5,000). Collectively, with the \$10,000 paid by the Conference to ARS, this will allow for whole issue to be Open Access.

**Action:** Mark Stafford Smith and Don Burnside to determine how ACIAR will be contracted and invoiced for their contribution to the SI.

*6.2.5. Process for identifying Special Issues (Paul Novelly)*

Paul said that there are difficulties in providing evidence from past SIs to demonstrate that investment of \$10,000 in a SI provides a sufficient return to the investor. Paul would welcome input from PC members on metrics that might be included in the business case. No impact factors for SI's are available. A work in progress.

*6.3 Virtual Issue (VI) – 30<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Westoby et al. (Andrew Ash)*

- a) The 'introduction' by Brian Walker and Mark Westoby has been delivered and some suggestions have been provided to the authors. Andrew Ash has identified two suitable papers from those published in 2018-2019 to replace earlier papers.

Clarification is required from Marisa Spiniello as to whether this Introduction will be included in Issue 1/Vol 42 as an 'Editorial Article' linked to the Virtual Issue, or located in the VI itself.

**Action:** Andrew Ash to determine how the Walker and Westoby Introduction will be linked with the VI.

b) Theme for a VI for 2021.

**Action:** PC members to review content of Volumes 40 and 41 in searching for a theme that could be the basis for a VI for 2021.

#### 6.4 Commissioned papers

##### 6.4.1 Grazing management (Don)

Council has committed funds for the writing and publication of a paper presenting principles of grazing management in the Southern Rangelands of Australia. Lead Authors to be Ron Hacker and Alec Holm. Council has requested that a researcher currently active in the field be introduced as a third author. Ron will approach Sarah McDonald (NSW DPI).

### 7. Range Management Newsletter (RMN)

#### 7.1. Report from Editor (Noelene Duckett)

Noelene Duckett reported verbally. RMN 19/3 has been loaded on the website but members have not yet been advised by email of availability as Noelene is having difficulty making it the 'current' newsletter and moving the previous one to the archive.

RMN 20/1 is nearly ready and will be published soon after RMN 19/3 subject to resolution of the difficulty in moving newsletters from 'current' to 'archive'. Blue Platypus has not been very cooperative in resolving this issue.

More information will be sought from collaborating newsletters and magazines.

### 8. Social Media

#### 8.1. Report from Social Media Editor (Sarah Moles)

Sarah provided the attached report (Attachment 1). Sarah emphasised the value of photos (particularly with people) as a means of building social media engagement. Posts related to the Indigenous Knowledge Forum at the IRC will be made regularly from now on following liaison between Sarah and Dana Kelly. After discussion, it was agreed that after a paper is accepted for TRJ, that the author be asked to provide a photo and 3-4 lines about their work for posting on the Facebook page.

**Action:** Paul, Sarah and Noelene to develop a system where TRJ authors are asked to provide a photo and 3-4 lines about their work for posting on the Facebook page. Paul will try this with Anita Chang's recent paper.

**Action:** Ron Hacker to request authors from the Special Issue on total grazing pressure management to provide photos and text to Sarah.

#### 8.2. Implementation of recommendations from the strategic review

Sarah provided the attached update on progress with implementing the recommendations (Attachment 2). Some comments were:

- Webinars would only be considered as opportunities arise.
- Developing an ARS presence on Wikipedia would be useful.

- Funding to be provided to enable Sarah to boost Facebook posts (\$10 per post to reach 200 people for 5 days; \$25 to boost post to reach 500 people for 5 days).

**Action:** PC recommend to Council that a budget of \$300 be provided to enable boosting of Facebook pages over the remainder of 2020.

**Action:** Ron Hacker to produce a draft Wikipedia entry about ARS, in conjunction with Sarah.

## 9. ARS web site

### 9.1. Report from Editor

Russell Grant provided a verbal report. The new site is live, but there are some on-going issues with functionality. Russell is developing his knowledge of Wordpress.

### 9.2. Progress/ Difficulties with the new site

Considerable difficulties have been experienced at times in maintaining contact with Blue Platypus, and in getting them to respond to queries/ issues. Setting up the membership system has been very difficult. Although there have been recent improvements, some issues remain unresolved.

**Action:** Russell Grant, Ron Hacker, Don Burnside and Noelene Duckett will arrange a tele-conference at the end of April 2020 to review the performance of the website and decide on how to approach Blue Platypus to achieve the desired functionality.

## 10. General Business

### 10.1. Vacancies on the PC

Two names were provided to Ron Hacker as possible replacements on the PC. Members of the PC were encouraged to provide more names.

### 10.2. New Chair of PC

Ron Hacker confirmed that he will definitely not be continuing in the role as A/Chair PC beyond 30 June 2020.

**Action:** The PC to advise Council that Ron Hacker will be leaving the position as A/Chair on 30 June 2020, regardless of whether a replacement has been chosen. Council needs to be more pro-active in securing a successor.

## 11. Date of future meetings

13 May;  
1 July;  
2 September;  
18 November.

Meeting closed at 7.30 pm.

## Attachment 1 – Social media report 30 Jan 2020 – 17 March 2020

As a rule of thumb, 3 posts are made on Facebook and Twitter each week. I also post anything PC members forward ASAP.

### Twitter

I've added "Impressions" as this is part of Twitter's analytics and easily reported; and Profile Visits (ditto) which means people are seeking to know more about ARS.

Actual replies are few and far between. 'Retweet with comment' post about quality of internet service generated notable interaction - ~4 exchanges.

### Facebook

Like and Love are by far the most widely used on our posts.

### Instagram

I've been given some great images and posted one from the Marble Bar area 16/3/20. I will work through them (adding photographer details) and make more of an effort to post to Instagram regularly.

Figures in table below are as at 16/3/20

Objectives	Key Performance Indicators		
	Facebook	Twitter	Instagram
Objective 1: Provide current information relevant to the use and management of Australian rangelands. Pillar B: 'Helpful and educational resources'	<b>Reach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of posts 24</li> <li>Followers 28/1/20 = 1053 16/3/20 = 1061</li> <li>Fans reached - &lt;28 days 551</li> <li>TOTAL REACH = 3,923</li> </ul>	<b>Reach</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Number of tweets (not including re-tweets) Feb - 31 March - 14</li> <li>New followers February – 7 March - 3</li> <li>TOTAL followers at 16/3/20 = 1,297</li> <li>Impressions February – 13,400 March - 10,100</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Growth in community following 279 followers (up from 274 in Nov 2019)</li> <li>Number of posts 1 (28 likes)</li> </ul>
Objective 2: Facilitate engagement and interaction on rangeland issues. Pillar C: Fun, relevant and inspiring content	<b>Engagement</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Comments - 5</li> <li>Shares – 45</li> <li>Likes -78</li> <li>Sentiment -Overwhelmingly 'Likes' and 'loves'</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retweets - 44</li> <li>Mentions: Feb = 16, top mention 135 engagements, March =7, top mention 35 engagements</li> <li>Profile visits: Feb = 41; March = 59</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Retweets</li> <li>Mentions</li> </ul>
Objective 3: Promote ARS as an organisation providing attractive benefits to members. Pillar A: 'ARS centric stories'	<b>Sentiment</b> Positive	<b>Sentiment</b> Hard to know!	

**FACEBOOK**

		<b>reach</b>	<b>engagements</b>	<b>likes</b>	<b>comments</b>	<b>shares</b>	
31/10/19	ARS2019 prizewinners	492	238	12	1	1	top post this quarter
01/11/19	Water & indigenous people	68	2	1		1	
04/11/19	astro tourism	216	6				
05/11/19	conf resentations up	104	2				
06/11/19	land clearing and climate change	220	31	3		5	
08/11/19	AWC kimberley reserve	105	1				
	DCQ newsletter	108	3				
11/11/19	female rangers on country	125	18				
13/11/19	The Conversation – climate change article	337	40	6		4	
15/11/19	B Traille on budgies	347	41	18	2	2	
18/11/19	AFI conference presentations	108	3				
19/11/19	RMN – travel grants, scholarships open	114	5				
20/11/19	threatened species website	169	12	3			
22/11/19	US rangelands website	154	6	3			
25/11/19	Drought proofing northern Aus	326	48	12	1	2	some angry, some sad
27/11/19	ntrition in bushfoods	150	3				
29/11/19	10 Deserts Indigenous rangers	160	6	5			
02/12/19	AWC job opportunity	242	21	5		1	
04/12/19	magic science and economics -choices in agriculture	135	5			1	
	Western Rivers Alliance – protecting Channel Country	142	12	1			
06/12/19	Feral horse impacts	236	15	6		3	
09/12/19	WA carbon farming	278	38	13	1	1	
10/12/19	call for papers, grasslands conference	207	7	3			
11/12/19	AWC restoring biodiversity in central desert	233	36	8	1	3	
13/12/19	BOM climate tracking 2019	144	11	3		2	
		<b>reach</b>	<b>engagements</b>	<b>likes</b>	<b>comments</b>	<b>shares</b>	
16/12/19	The Conversation – life post human civilisation	154	9	1	2		v positive comment
17/12/19	Michael Jefferies farewell comments	212	17	7		2	
18/12/19	Hairy aussie spiders	96	4			1	
20/12/19	MDB water wars and politics	148	3				
23/12/19	AWC actions to fight extinction	218	17	4		1	
24/12/19	ARS2019 synthesis doc online	145	4				

25/12/19	Merry Xmas	322	20	6		1	
	ESA seeking new editor	161	2				
26/12/19	Web of life	338	32	3		6	
30/12/19	ESA newsletter	227	9	4			
06/01/20	TRJ abstracts online	133	4				
08/01/20	Cooper Ck turtle	210	19	11			
10/01/20	Call for more funding for reducing bushfire severity	161	9				
13/01/20	Profile of Ron	238	20	9	1		unrelated comment
15/01/20	mistletoe	265	18	6		1	
17/01/20	Back our Outback at Woodford	132	2				
20/01/20	cultural burning & indigenous rangers	250	23	6	3	2	
22/01/20	Profile, Daryl	451	44	11	1	1	
24/01/20	bushfires and threatened species crises	107	10	1		1	
27/01/20	Indigenous Australian helping Canadian first people with cultural fire	336	28	4	2	3	
28/01/20	Firesticks Alliance – shared at Dana's request						
29/01/20	Tom Griffiths & David Lindemeyer talk bushfire aftermath with Phillip Adams						
<b>TOTAL 10.00am 28/1/20</b>		<b>9224</b>	<b>904</b>	<b>175</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>45</b>	

		<b>reach</b>	<b>engagements</b>	<b>likes</b>	<b>comments</b>	<b>shares</b>	
29/01/20	congratulating Brian Walkers AO	192	12	8	1	1	
31/01/20	duststorms and soil loss	271	19				
01/02/20	MLA postgrad study awards	135	3				
03/02/20	water rats learn to eat cane toads	263	52	14		4	
05/02/20	promoting vertebrae pests conference in Melbourne	132	4				
07/02/20	Yindanbandji people & luxury eco-tourism, Pilbara NP	217	17	9		2	
10/02/20	Tom Griffiths & David Lindanmeyer talk bushfire aftermath with Phillip Adams	125	3			1	
12/02/20	Wooleen homestead & David Pollock	336	58	8	2		
		<b>reach</b>	<b>engagements</b>	<b>likes</b>	<b>comments</b>	<b>shares</b>	
14/02/2020	DavidPocock regenerative ag	161	7	2			
17/02/2020	Conversation article, bushfire impacts on aquatic ecology	161	6		1		
19/02/20	Rangelands minesite rehabilitation	210	24	3		3	
21/02/20	Ecosystem services in national accounts	110	4				
24/02/20	TRJ article Coolatai grass	122	2				
26/02/20	Falling waterbird populations	314	203	10		32	

27/02/20	Bunny ears cactus	129	8				
02/03/20	ABH Fund – have you taken the Bush Pledge?	115	3				
04/03/20	Jill Landsberg scholarship	120	10	4		1	
06/03/20	new bait for feral cats	131	6	1			
09/03/20	Ecos 263	117	3				
10/03/20	Increased funding for indigenous rangers	326	36	15	1	1	
11/03/20	Climate & Carbon Conference	118	9	1			
13/03/20	Conversation article – predicted outlook autumn 2020	118	10	3			
16/03/20	"How does climate change make (scientists) feel?"						
	<b>totals</b>	<b>3923</b>	<b>499</b>	<b>78</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>45</b>	

## Attachment 2 – Implementing recommendations from the SM Review

Recommendation	Status / action required, (responsibility)
That the objectives for the Society's social media activity remain unchanged.	Completed
That the Social Media Engagement Strategy 2015-17 be updated for 2018-20, retaining the basic elements of the original strategy but incorporating those of the following recommendations which are accepted by Council.	Underway (SME)
That our ISP be asked to provide detailed information on web site page usage on a regular basis (say 6-monthly).	Russell to flag with Blue Platypus
That the SME utilise current content from the web site (e.g. TRJ Abstracts, RMN articles) as a basis for social media posts as frequently as possible (consistent with Pillar 1 of the content strategy – ARS-centric stories).	Photos need from ALL please. Publication requirement please?
That the SME provide an abridged version of the current report format for each PC meeting.	Format adopted January 2020
That the arrangement with Wright Social be reviewed in October 2018 and that PC (at its meeting on 7 November) make a recommendation to Council for decision at its November meeting.	Completed
That PC prepares a profile of ARS for submission to Wikipedia after Council approval.	Who to lead?
That Council establish a Facebook Ad account, to be used at the discretion of the SME to promote specific posts, and install Facebook Pixel at the ARS web site.	Agenda item 18/3/20 Russell to liaise with Blue Platypus re Facebook Pixel
That Council supports the SME to develop a weekly series based on personal profiles to boost engagement and increase relevancy among current and future membership.	Photos, photos, photos needed! Weekly is a lot ... May I suggest PC discusses the need for photos / visual material as part of TRJ submission /publication process? (SME)
That Council supports the SME to actively seek original and relevant content by promoting opportunities for students to contribute articles to the ARS web site/social media with annual prizes to be won.	Process? SME to reconnect with youthful ARS2019 volunteers.
That the SME aim to increase the posting frequency to Facebook to 5 days a week.	Noted. Timeline?
That ARS host Internet forums on specific topics, moderated by the SME or a guest moderator, when opportunities arise.	SME discussed with Heidi. Zoom or similar platform account needed. Quite doable via Zoom, internet connection permitting. Useful Zoom webinar training resources available online. I would support the guest moderator approach. Process for deciding topics?
That ARS, through the SME, take steps to incorporate social media icons into email signatures and official stationery.	All ARS office bearers and PC members.