

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

**Meeting on Wednesday, 13 November 2019
by teleconference**

MINUTES

Ron Hacker opened the meeting and welcomed members at 6.24 pm (EST).

1. Present:

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

2. Apologies:

Jen Silcock, Wal Whalley, Daryl Green.

3. Additional items for general business:

Nil

4. Minutes of the previous meeting – 3 July 2019

Motion: That the minutes of the Publications Committee meeting held by teleconference on 3 July 2019 be accepted as circulated.

Moved: Don Burnside; Seconded: Andrew Ash. 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. So far 73 manuscripts have been received in 2019, which is down on 2018, but not 2017. Rejection rate is about 50 per cent. Authors continue to be lax in completing revisions and re-submitting, which slows progress to publication.

So far there are 7 papers available for Issue 5, Vol 41. By late November/early December, there could be one more available. After discussion it was agreed to publish Issue 5 with available papers (8 or 7) as a 'slim' issue, and then encourage rapid completion of the Total Grazing Pressure Special Issue (SI) to be published in February 2020 as Issue 6, Vol 41.

Marisa Spiniello is not in favour of publishing the 2019 conference abstracts as Issue 6, Vol. 41 as this is likely to distract from the attractiveness of the conference SI when it is published.

6.2. Special issues (SIs)

6.2.1. Management of Total Grazing Pressure (Ron Hacker)

This SI is being edited by Ron Hacker, Lester Pahl and Katrina Sinclair. All of the papers have been submitted, one has been accepted, one requires only minor revision for acceptance, and all others are undergoing either their first or second revision. The final synthesis paper has not yet been written. Publication is likely to be Issue 6, Vol

41, February 2020. Authors are being urged to complete revisions ASAP. Payment for the SI has been received from NSW DPI.

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

The contract has been signed by QDAF and ARS. Progress has been slow, and Andrew Ash will be meeting with Jackie Wilcox and Neil Cliffe next week to discuss.

Action: Andrew Ash to contact QDAF and encourage progress.

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

The contract will be available for perusal by the President in the near future, after which it can be returned to China for signing. The SI will essentially be the output from the conference attended by Paul Novelly. The list of papers provided by the three co-operating Chinese institutions, and included in the draft contract, can be considered as a formal proposal for the content of the SI. However, they also need to include a synthesis paper. Ron Hacker and Paul Novelly will provide advice to the Chinese on this matter. Publication will occur in 2021. The tentative title of the SI is *Theory and application of the grassland Comprehensive and Sequential Classification System*.

Motion: That the papers listed in Appendix 1 of the draft contract for the SI *Theory and application of the grassland Comprehensive and Sequential Classification System* be accepted as a formal proposal for the SI.

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

Action: Paul Novelly and Ron Hacker to provide advice to the Chinese proponents regarding the inclusion of a synthesis paper in the SI.

6.2.4. *Special Issue from ARS 2019 Canberra*

No update available.

6.2.5. *Potential Special Issue from the XIth IRC, Nairobi, Kenya (Paul Novelly)*

Dana Kelly has advised that although there is interest in a journal special issue coming out of the IRC, the clear preference is for it to be an African Journal. No further action will be taken.

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

CSIRO publishing has agreed (i) to nominate a person to join the Special Issue Selection Team, and (ii) to assist in developing a business case that be put to potential proponents outlining the benefits of publishing a SI via TRJ.

6.3 *Virtual Issue – 30th anniversary of Westoby et al. (Andrew Ash)*

The papers have been selected. Brian Walker has indicated to Andrew Ash that he will work with Mark Westoby to produce the Introduction. It could be produced early in 2020.

6.4 *Commissioned papers*

6.4.1. *Grazing management*

Don Burnside advised that he is asking Council to commit modest funds for the writing and publication of a paper presenting principles of grazing management in the Southern Rangelands of Australia, with additional funds for it to be made Open Access.

6.5 Engagement with Advisory Editors – production quality assessment

Ron Hacker circulated feedback from Advisory Editors (AE) on the production quality (spelling, punctuation, English expression etc.) of six papers recently published in TRJ – three by English-speaking authors and three by authors of non-English speaking background (NESB). Numerous issues were identified in all papers but in two of the six the issues were sufficient to cause concern for the comprehensibility of the work. Issues of English expression were most notable in papers by NESB authors. This is seen as an issue facing all journals

After discussion, it was agreed to further test the use of the in-house 'editorial panel' (Tony Pressland, Margaret Friedel, Wal Whalley and Ron Hacker) to address issues with NESB authors. Ron will send the feedback from the AEs to CSIRO Publishing for information and seek advice on how best to address the issues, particularly use of English language editorial services. David Eldridge noted that other journals will sometimes refuse a submission of a manuscript until a reasonable standard of English has been achieved. Authors can provide a certificate from an English language editing service to verify this.

6.6 Discussion with CSIRO Publishing at the Canberra conference (Ron Hacker)

Ron circulated the minutes of this meeting and reported on subsequent discussions. A draft business plan for Special Issues and guide for the preparation of virtual issues have been provided by Marisa Spiniello. CSIRO Publishing is requesting that they be recognised as sponsors of future conferences.

7. Range Management Newsletter (RMN)

7.1. Report from Editor (Noelene Duckett)

Material is being assembled for the third RMN for 2019. Noelene has concern about how the current and recent issue of the RMN will be transferred to the new website – will clarify with Tanya Bellchambers.

Noelene contacted 53 other newsletters/ magazines operating in a similar 'domain' to ARS, with the response that 3 will allow use of their material with permissions, and 6 are keen to collaborate in sharing material. This was seen by the PC as a good response.

Action: Noelene will circulate the spreadsheet of those contacted and their responses to PC members.

8. Social Media

8.1. Report from Social Media Editor (Sarah Moles)

Sarah provided the attached report (Attachment 1). She advised that she is having some difficulty with recent changes to Twitter. However, the ARS presence in social media is steadily increasing. Photos accompanying TRJ abstracts seem to be very important in stimulating social media response.

[Subsequent to the meeting, the ARS Council's acceptance of 13 recommendations in the review of the use of social media was sent to Ron

Hacker. Sarah is being encouraged to commence implementation of these recommendations.]

9. ARS web site

9.1. Report from Editor

Russell Grant provided a verbal report. The new site is very nearly ready to 'go live' probably by the end of November. Functionality is almost identical to the existing site, except for changes to the membership set-up.

Paul Beaton (formerly Fat Beehive) has been in contact and has advised that server space for the current web site has been paid only until 1 January 2020. The current site will disappear on this date if new server space is not paid for beforehand. It is essential that the new site be operational before that happens.

10. General Business

10.1. Wal Whalley will resign for the PC as of 31 December. Ron Hacker will prepare an article for the November issue of RMN in recognition of his contribution, with assistance from Don Burnside and Paul Novelly.

10.2. Don Burnside advised that Steve McLeod is keen to nominate as Chair of the PC, and will submit a formal nomination before Christmas. Ron suggested that additional nominations would be good if these can be obtained.

11. Date of future meetings

To be advised

Meeting closed at 7.50 pm.

Attachment 1.

Report from Sarah Moles, Social Media Editor, 13 November 2019

I've learned a bit about how the Facebook and Twitter analytics work and will change the times at which I schedule posts accordingly. 400 or more of our Facebook followers tend to be online between midnight and 3 am; and 5 pm and midnight (Pacific time)

Our Twitter audience is estimated to be 65% women
An estimated 75% of our audience like dogs and science news, 95% like weather and 93% like astronomy.

Since my last report I feel there has been a better mix of links to TRJ articles/abstracts and info, regional news posts and other posts aimed at getting people to click through to our website. Discounts on CSIRO products are well received on Twitter.

Having a photo to accompany a post referring to TRJ abstracts made a very noticeable difference. I do hope more will be forthcoming!

Twitter analytics are summarised for 28 day period.

- Followers up 20 on previous 28 day period
- October tweets = 21,400 impressions
- Top October tweet, Fiona Simpson interviewed by Katharine Murphy = 5670 impressions
- So far, top November tweet is about Astro tourism in the rangelands = 430 and total Nov impressions = 10,400
- Total impressions for previous 28 days = 23,300, an increase of 53% over previous 28 days period.

Facebook

Analytics for past 28 days

- Post featuring Bob's photo of ARS prizewinners top scored with reach of 492, 124 post clicks and 119 reactions. (Thanks for sharing that picture, Bob!)
- Post re Guardian article about the link between land clearing and climate change = 219 reach and 31 engagements
- Post 11/11/19 re ABC radio piece on growing numbers of women rangers working on country – 91 reach 11 engagements in 24 hours.
- Total post reach 14 Oct – 10 Nov = 947
- A reach of between 100 & 200 seems to be our 'normal' range.

Numbers of likes and followers has increased on all platforms.

| Date | Facebook Likes | Facebook followers | Twitter | Instagram |
|----------|----------------|--------------------|---------|-----------|
| 09/12/18 | 901 | | | 1028 252 |
| 18/01/19 | 913 | | | 1050 252 |
| 04/02/19 | 914 | | | 1059 255 |
| 28/02/19 | 921 | | | 1075 255 |
| 26/03/19 | 922 | | | 1090 257 |
| 07/05/19 | 945 | | | 1123 257 |
| 06/07/19 | 970 | | | 1145 261 |
| 19/08/19 | 980 | | 1041 | 1176 264 |
| 23/09/19 | 982 | | 1042 | 1185 266 |
| 12/11/19 | 988 | | 1050 | 1244 274 |