



The Australian Rangeland Society

2019 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - Meeting #267

Wednesday 22nd May 2019 at 5.05 pm EST

135 Wren Street, Longreach, Queensland, 4730
and by teleconference

MINUTES

1. Open meeting

The meeting was opened at 5.05 pm (EST).

Present: David Phelps (President), Megan Munchenberg, Bob Shepherd (Secretary), Kate Masters, Ron Hacker, Don Burnside (Finance and Audit Officer), Andrew Ash, Dionne Walsh (@ 5.30pm)

2. Apologies

Marg Friedel & Martin Andrew.

3. Minutes of the 2018 Annual General Meeting (Meeting #262)

Motion: That the minutes of the 2018 AGM that was held on 30th May 2018 are a true and accurate record of the meeting.

Moved: David Phelps

Seconded: Megan Munchenberg

Carried

There were no items arising from the minutes for discussion.

4. Directors' Report

Your directors present their report on The Australian Rangeland Society – hereafter “the Society” or “ARS” – for the year ended 31st December 2018.

The names of directors in office at any time during the year were:

David George Phelps (Principal Scientist, DAF, Qld, Age 51) – 1/1/18 to 31/12/18;
Robert Norman Shepherd (Principal Scientist, DAF, Qld, Age 64) – 1/1/18 to 31/12/17; and
Donald Grosvenor Burnside (Director, DG Burnside & Associates, Age 68) – 1/1/18 to 31/12/18.

The Society's operations for the year resulted in a profit of \$1,483.

The Society publishes and circulates three issues of the *Range Management Newsletter* and six issues of *The Rangeland Journal* to the members annually, runs a Biennial Conference, provides grants to assist members with travel and research, maintains a publicly accessible website, provides social media platforms, and promotes the advancement of the science and art of using Australia's rangeland resources for all purposes commensurate with their continued sustainability and productivity.

Review of operations

The Society's governing Council met four times by teleconference and held an Annual General Meeting (AGM) on 30 May 2018 (a total of five meetings).

The agenda for every scheduled meeting included discussion of membership, finance and Publication Committee reports, matters related to the strategic direction of the Society and the Biennial Conferences of the Society.

At the AGM, held on 30 May 2018, the Office-Bearers and general Council members were confirmed as follows.

President	David Phelps – continuing member as President and Director
Secretary	Bob Shepherd – continuing member as Secretary and Director
Finance and Audit Officer	Donald Burnside – continuing member as Finance and Audit Officer and Director
General Council Members	Andrew Ash – continuing member Cathy Waters – continuing member Dionne Walsh – continuing member Angus Whyte – continuing member Megan Munchenberg – continuing member

The following were members of the ARS Council, and attended meetings during 2018.

Name	Meetings attended (including AGM)	Meetings eligible to attend (including AGM)
David Phelps	5	5
Bob Shepherd	5	5
Don Burnside	5	5
Andrew Ash	2	5
Megan Munchenberg	4	5
Dionne Walsh	3	5
Cathy Waters	2	5
Angus Whyte	3	5

Major Council activities during 2018 are presented below.

- Strategic Planning is an on-going agenda item, following the completion of a SWOT analysis and review of previous strategic and business plans in 2017 and a strategic planning workshop in Port Augusta in September 2017. A further strategic planning meeting was held in Brisbane in October 2018, involving current and former members of Council, members of the Publications Committee, and the Chair of the International Rangeland Congress Continuing Committee. The main actions to date have been advocacy for investment in rangeland R, D & E, commitment to publishing more technical material in the *Range Management Newsletter* via sharing content with a range of identified like-minded organisations, and exploring the value of life memberships.
- The decision by Council to offer three-year memberships at a slight discount in 2017, in addition to standard annual renewals was vindicated with 21 members taking up this option for 2017-2019 and 11 members taking up the option of 2018-2020 memberships. To date (April 2019) a further 9 members have opted for 2019-2021 memberships. In summary, 24 per cent of paying members are now on three year memberships. Membership subscriptions were retained at existing levels, which have not been increased since 2016.
- Council considered recommendations from the Publications Committee for appointments and renewal of appointments of Associate Editors and Advisory Editors for *The Rangeland*

Journal. Six issues of the journal were published in 2018, including two well received Special Issues and a Virtual Issue (see further information below). Two Special Issues for publication are in preparation for 2019, with the Publications Committee seeking ideas for further SIs from Advisory Editors and ARS members.

- Three issues of the *Range Management Newsletter* were published during the year. As indicated above, a range of possible initiatives were identified to increase the value of the RMN to members. These are being implemented (see further information below).
- With Council's approval, the Publications Committee committed funds to the review and further development of the Society's social media. The Society's exposure through social media use by members and others is increasing slowly but steadily and represents an area where future growth will be encouraged.
- Planning for the 20th Biennial Conference to be held in September 2019 in Canberra is underway, with an Organising Committee being led by Dr Mark Stafford Smith. Council is represented on the Organising Committee by Dr Cathy Waters. In deciding to hold the conference in Canberra, the Council and the Organising Committee for the conference is hoping to have rangeland issues in the spotlight attracting policy makers and key decision makers in rural, remote and regional R, D & E. investment.
- The sponsoring organisation, host nation and venue for the 2025 International Rangeland Congress will be decided at the Nairobi Congress in 2020, and the Australian Rangeland Society had decided to submit a bid for it to be held in Australia. The host nation nomination and selection process is managed by the IRC Continuing Committee which has representatives from all rangeland regions of the world. The Australian representatives are Dr Dana Kelly (Chair, IRC Continuing Committee) and Dr David Phelps (President, ARS). At the time of writing (April 2019), Pieter Conradie, has agreed to chair a team of volunteers who will prepare the bid with support from ARS resources.
- The Society applied for and was granted accreditation as an observer to the governing body of UN Environment which was renamed as the United Nations Environment Assembly of the United Nations Environment Program by the General Assembly Resolution 67/251 of 13 March 2013. The ARS will receive invitations as an observer to all public meetings and sessions of the United Nations Environment Assembly and its subsidiary organs. This is a significant step in building the international profile of the Society and the Australian rangelands.
- The Publications Committee and Council have been concerned for some time about the poor service being delivered by the website provider and ultimately decided to seek another provider. After a tendering process, at the time of writing (April 2019), negotiations are underway with a preferred provider. Setting up a new provider will result in the incurring of some one-off expenditure in 2019 (see further information about this process below).

Membership

Summary

At the end of 2018, there were 209 current paid up and complimentary members – termed as 'active' members. Those members from 2017 who did not pay their membership during 2018 (n = 38) have been shifted to the 'inactive' category. This total at the end of 2018 excludes those complimentary members (n = 9) whose membership expired on 31 December 2018.

Detail

We have recruited a number of new or re-joined paid members – 16 in total – through 2018, which is encouraging. Some of these people who have joined very late in 2018 will have their membership carried through to the end of 2019.

In 2018, there were 37 complimentary members, being Fellows of the Society, Editors of the Journal, RMN and Social Media, the chair of the Publications Committee, Associate Editors and

recipients of prizes (see details below). Although the total in the table below is 39, two of the people were in two categories, resulting in 37 people holding complimentary memberships at the end of 2018.

Complimentary memberships for the prize winners at the *Restore, Regenerate and Revegetate* and the ARS 2017 Conferences expired at the end of 2018. They are being encouraged to maintain their membership, with concessional registration at the ARS 2019 conference being an inducement.

Council will continue this style of promotion to further conferences, and within under-graduate programs to promote rangelands and the Society to a larger audience.

Complimentary memberships in 2018

Category	Number	Comments
Fellows and past Fellows of the ARS	7	One of the Fellows is an Associate Editor of the ARS, and one is the Chair of the PC
People receiving honoraria for services to the Society	5	Includes the Chair of the PC, Editor-in-Chief of <i>The Rangeland Journal</i> , Editor of the RMN and Social Media and Website Editors
Associate Editors of <i>The Rangeland Journal</i>	18	One Associate Editor is also a Fellow of the ARS
Student Prize winners at the RRR Conference, Armidale, 2017	2	These complimentary memberships expired at 31 December 2018
Prize winners at the 19 th Biennial Conference, ARS, Port August, 2017	7	These complimentary memberships expired at 31 December 2018

In addition to publishing *The Rangeland Journal*, CSIRO Publishing manages subscriptions for the Society's "Library" subscribers as well as some of its "Institutional/Corporate" subscribers. There were 93 institutional subscribers to *The Rangeland Journal* in 2018.

The number of Institutional Subscribers to the Journal has remained almost the same for several years. Although the Society does not benefit financially from their patronage, through the Journal, they provide the ARS with very wide exposure across the world.

Membership at 31 December 2018

Category	Hardcopy Journal RMN	+	E-journal + RMN	RMN only	Total
2018 members to pay in 2019	83		41	14	138
Complimentary members for 2019	6		22	0	28**
Members paid for 2019 (includes those on 3-yearly memberships)	25		12	6	43
ARS members	114		75	20	209**
Institutional subscribers	10		83	0	93
Grand total	124		158	20	302**

** excludes those complimentary members whose membership expired on 31 December 2018.

Membership trends through years

As shown in the table below, our membership is trending slightly downwards across the years. There is always a 'boost' in the number of new members during a conference year, as shown in 2012 and 2017, but we also have a similar number allowing their membership to lapse. These people are not lost to the Society, as their names are retained in the database as inactive members, and they receive invitations to attend the biennial conferences.

Category	December 2012*	December 2013	December 2014	December 2015*	December 2016	December 2017*	December 2018
ARS members at 31 December	260	246	220	221	182	231	209**
ARS Members joined during year	44	26	22	37	38	71	16
ARS Members left during year	81	40	48	36	77	22	38
Institutional subscribers to TRJ	94	90	91	95	90	91	93

* conference year ** this number included 28 people holding complimentary membership as at 1 January 2019 (recipients of honoraria, Fellows, Associate Editors).

Awards

Fellowships

There were no nominations for Fellowships received in 2018.

Travel Grant

There were no applications for Travel Grants in 2018. Dr Dana Kelly (Chair of the International Rangeland Congress Continuing Committee) was supported for travel to Kenya to assist in the planning of the joint IRC/IGC to be held in September 2020.

Committees

In addition to Council, the Society continues to rely heavily on volunteers who fulfil vital roles.

Publications Committee

The Publications Committee comprised the following members as at 31 December 2018. The committee, which is chaired by Dr Ron Hacker, meets between Council meetings, and provides a report to the subsequent Council meeting with recommendations for Council's consideration.

Name	Role
Dr Andrew Ash	
Dr Donald Burnside	
Dr Noelene Duckett	Editor, <i>Range Management Newsletter</i>
Prof. David Eldridge	
Mr Russell Grant	Website Editor
Mr Daryl Green	
Adj. Prof. Ron Hacker	Chair
Ms Sarah Moles	Social Media Editor
Dr Paul Novelly	Editor-in-Chief, <i>The Rangeland Journal</i>
Dr Jen Silcock	
Adj. Assoc. Prof. R.D.B. (Wal) Whalley	

Mr Daryl Green was appointed to the committee from 1 June 2018. Ms Camilla Osborn resigned as Website Editor on 14 February 2018 and Mr Russell Grant was appointed to this role on 18 June 2018. In the interim the web site was managed by Dr Noelene Duckett. Ms Jodie Ward resigned as Social Media Editor on 4 July 2018 and was replaced by Ms Sarah Moles from 3 December 2018.

In the interim social media activity was maintained by Wright Social. Dr Jocelyn Davies resigned from the committee on 7 November 2018.

Associate Editors of *The Rangeland Journal*

There were 18 Associate Editors of the journal at 31 December 2018, as shown below.

Name	Country
Dr S.G. Bray	Australia
Prof. A. Cingolani	Argentina
Dr O. P. Dube	Botswana
Prof. F. Hou	China
Prof. B. Hubert	France
Dr S.R. McLeod	Australia
Prof. G.I. Metternicht	Australia
Dr A. W. Muger	Australia
Dr A. J. Pressland	Australia
Dr D. Race	Australia
Dr R. Smith	Australia
Dr D. M. Stafford-Smith	Australia
Dr M. Tighe	Australia
Prof. Ling Wang	China
Prof. G. M. Wardle	Australia
Dr A. Waters-Bayer	The Netherlands
Dr I. W. Watson	Australia
Adj. Assoc. Prof. R. D. B. Whalley	Australia

Mr Neil MacLeod resigned as an Associate Editor with effect from 1 January 2018. Prof. Graciela Metternicht and Dr Steve Bray took up appointments as Associate Editors from 1 January 2018. Dr Rhiannon Smith was appointed an Associate Editor from 18 October 2018.

Advisory Editors of *The Rangeland Journal*

There were nine Advisory Editors of the journal at 31 December 2018, as shown below. The terms of all Advisory Editors ended on 30 September 2018. All were offered an extension to 30 September 2021 and all accepted.

Name	Country
Dr B. T. Bestelmeyer	USA
Dr J. R. Brown	USA
Dr M.H. Friedel	Australia
Prof. I. Gordon	Australia
Prof. J. Huang	China
Prof. O. E. Sala	USA
Prof. D. Wang	China
Dr A. Waters-Bayer	The Netherlands
Dr I. Wright	Ethiopia

Publications

The Rangeland Journal¹

Volume 40 of *The Rangeland Journal* was published in 2018, comprising six issues and 618 journal pages. This compares with 567 pages in 2017, 618 pages in 2016 and 635 pages in 2015. Prior to 2014 the journal published only four issues per year and the number of pages ranged from 417-455 (2010-2013). Five papers were published as (gold) open access during the year (four in 2017, one in 2016, two in 2015). The number of institutional subscriptions increased from 91 in 2017 to 93 in 2018. The majority of these (over 80%) were for on-line subscription only.

The journal received 112 submissions in 2018 (127 in 2017, 131 in 2016, 127 in 2015) with a rejection rate of 43 per cent (64% in 2017, 50% in 2016, 55% in 2015). The rejection rate includes manuscripts classified as 'hard reject', 'reject and resubmit', and 'withdrawn'. The decline in the rejection rate was a consequence of fewer manuscripts being classified as 'reject and resubmit'.

Details of submissions received during the year are shown below. The number of submissions from Australia, North America, South America and "Rest of the World" was similar to or higher than the average of the 2014-2018 period, while submissions from Asia-Pacific, Middle East and Europe were lower. Overall, the total number of submissions is very stable (as shown by the low coefficient of variation) but within regions the submission rate varies considerably from year to year. For the Asia-Pacific region this reflects the variability in submissions associated with the publication of a number of Chinese Special Issues in recent years. For the Middle East, the reason is unclear but may be related to English language difficulties experienced by authors together with economic and logistical constraints on field work in a number of countries in the region. The journal consistently fails to attract substantial numbers of submissions from North America, South America and New Zealand, probably due to the presence of significant competing journals in these regions.

Number of submissions received by *The Rangeland Journal*

	Australia	New Zealand	Asia-Pacific	Middle East	Europe	North America	South America	Rest of World	Total
2018	44	1	25	8	6	7	6	15	112
Average (2014-18)	38.0	0.2	36.6	13.6	12.2	5.2	7.6	11.0	124.4
CV % (2014-18)	23.2	200.0	36.5	37.1	28.6	28.3	31.8	21.5	5.2

Two of the 2018 issues were Special Issues ('*Understanding Ecosystem Function in Grasslands Under Climate Change, Inner Mongolian Plateau, China*' and '*Developing Northern Australia – Lessons and Opportunities*'). These were Issue 2 and Issue 4 respectively. There is one Special issue (SI) for 2019 virtually complete (The ARS 2017 Biennial Conference SI), with a second SI ('*Management of Total Grazing Pressure*') likely. No SIs are contracted for 2020 as yet, but it is likely the SI associated with the 2019 Biennial Conference will be published in 2020.

The Journal's Impact Factor (IF) fell slightly from 1.211 in 2016 to 1.080 in 2017 (figures are released mid-year for the previous calendar year i.e. the IF released in June 2018 was for the 2017 calendar year), with the corresponding 5-yearly IFs of 1.262 and 1.206. The journal was ranked 119 out of 160 journals in the Ecology category in 2017 (comparable to the 2016 ranking of 108 out of 153). The table below shows the number of copies of the six issues of the Journal printed and distributed in 2017.

¹ Data are taken, or derived, from the Publisher's **Report** to the Publications Committee (on *The Rangeland Journal's* Performance in 2018), dated April 2019.

Volume/ Issue No	Print run ¹	No. of copies for members	No. of copies for institutional subscriptions	No. of copies for ARS ²	No. of advances ³	No. of copies for store ⁴	Total copies distributed	Approx. No. of Spares ⁴
40/1	175	120	10	5	6	35	135	46
40/2 (SI)	165	122	10	5	6	33	137	34
40/3	165	123	10	5	6	25	138	33
40/4 (SI)	165	122	10	5	6	26	137	34
40/5	165	117	10	5	6	27	132	39
40/6	175	114	10	5	6	35	129	52

¹ Standard print run varies as member numbers vary over the year.

² Number of copies for ARS decreased from 20 to 5 from 38/5 at the request of ARS.

³ Printed in addition to standard print run for Production Editor (1), reception display (1), Journal Publisher (1), marketing/internal use (3).

⁴ No. of spares and copies for store are not identical as the printer delivers up to 5% more than the standard print run at no extra cost. Some copies are used for marketing purposes at conferences. Copies for store are accurate as at time of delivery, no. of spares are calculated on the basis of standard print run – distributed copies + advance copies received.

The spares include stock on site and stock in the warehouse.

SI – Special Issue

A virtual issue titled *Grazing and Biodiversity – The Positive Side*, comprising 10 papers from previous journal volumes, was made available for free downloading of papers during the period 1 November 2018 – 31 January 2019. The issue was extensively promoted by both CSIRO Publishing and the Society. A total of 278 downloads of papers in the virtual issue occurred during this period, a rate considerably higher than the average rate for these papers over the previous two years.

The Society Website (<http://www.austrangesoc.com.au/>)

The web site is the primary public face of the Society and the repository of the Society's archives (apart from *The Rangeland Journal* for which the archive is held by CSIRO Publishing, with a link from the Members Area of the Society's home page).

Ms Camilla Osborn resigned as Website Editor on 14 February 2018. Dr Noelene Duckett (Editor of *Range Management Newsletter*) assumed temporary responsibility for web site management (mainly posting of new material) until the appointment of Mr Russell Grant for a three year term commencing on 18 June 2018.

The Society's website host, Fat Beehive, who had provided a very satisfactory level of service, was taken over by a new company, ZymZen, in mid-2017. Following this take over the level of service declined and in an attempt to clarify a number of issues Dr Hacker and Mr Grant met with the principal of ZymZen and the company's Art Director in Sydney on 7 August 2018. Issues discussed at this meeting included dysfunctional links and email addresses as well as potential site developments such as a 'library facility' to enhance the availability of Society archives to search engines. At the time ZymZen was preoccupied with the migration of their portfolio to a new server offering improved security and administration features following a major hacking incident. The ARS website was launched on the new server in October.

For the remainder of 2018, website management was focused on progressing the resolution of a growing number of technical issues including the inoperability of email addresses assigned to the President and Secretary, a dysfunctional link for member access to *The Rangeland Journal* archive, problems with the Instagram link and inconsistencies in resolving membership numbers in the administration module. Despite the server migration, the website host was unresponsive or ineffective in resolving an increasing breadth of issues. The situation became sufficiently serious that in order to ensure site stability and performance tenders were called for the transfer of the web site to a new host in February 2019.

Routine update of site content was maintained during 2018, but no significant development of content was undertaken pending resolution of the situation outlined above. Issues associated with the public availability of papers from a number of previous biennial conferences and search engine access to individual articles in the *Range Management Newsletter* archive remained unresolved at the end of the year.

The Range Management Newsletter

Three issues of the newsletter were produced in 2018 – March, September and early December. Each issue included around 14 articles with just over half of these articles relating directly to ARS business. David Phelps' editorials were a particular highlight for 2018 and his efforts in providing such insightful and thought-provoking contributions should be recognised. It should also be noted that while the number of volunteered articles remained about the same as previous years, it has become increasingly difficult to source original research-type articles for the newsletter.

The Publications Committee undertook a review of the *Range Management Newsletter* and submitted a number of recommendations for revitalising the newsletter to Council in December 2017. Council considered and accepted all eight of the Publication Committee recommendations in November 2018. While implementing these recommendations will be a priority for 2019, some ground work has already commenced particularly in regard to establishing formal reciprocal arrangements for sharing content with other relevant newsletters. It is also hoped that implementing some of the other recommendations will lead to an increase in the flow of original articles such as opinion pieces, research updates and lay summaries of papers appearing in *The Rangeland Journal*. As part of the revitalisation process it would be desirable to appoint volunteers to a number of new positions to assist, for example, with liaison with collaborating newsletters and source opinion pieces. Further consideration will be given to such appointments in 2019.

As reported last year, the complete *Range Management Newsletter/Range Assessment Newsletter* archive has been uploaded on to the ARS website and is freely available to any readers (apart from the most recent issue which is available only to members). Unfortunately, due to continuing problems with the ARS website provider, noted above, it has not been possible to determine how to update the website to allow individual articles within these archived newsletters to be available to search engines. This has been a source of ongoing frustration and also remains a priority for 2019.

Social Media

Following the resignation of the Ms Jodie Ward as Social Media Editor (SME) on 4 July 2018 the Society's social media profile, particularly in relation to Facebook and Twitter, was maintained on a contractual basis by Wright Social (Heidi Wright) until December 2018 when the role was taken over by Ms Sarah Moles. Sarah has a long history of involvement in natural resource management across the Murray Darling, Lake Eyre and Great Artesian Basin areas.

Three original posts are scheduled per week for Facebook and Twitter with fewer posts made to Instagram. This maintains the level of activity established by the previous SME and Wright Social. As previously, a considerable number of Twitter posts are re-tweeted, in addition to original posts. Posts continue to reflect the three 'pillars' of the Society's social media strategy (helpful & educational, fun & inspiring, and ARS-centric.) The incoming SME has used the same strategy to promote articles published in *The Rangeland Journal* and papers from the 2018 biennial conference). Posts continue to draw positive sentiment from audiences across all platforms.

The ARS social media presence continued to grow slowly over the year. At the end of December 2018 ARS had:

- 909 Facebook followers (801 in December 2017);
- 1040 Twitter followers (approx. 963 in December 2017; and
- 252 Instagram followers (approx. 249 in December 2017).

(Approximate figures reflect the limitations of the package or the version being run by the Society)

The new SME is using the scheduling platform Buffer to assist in managing the social media accounts. This allows the automatic scheduling of posts compiled in advance. It has proved successful for Facebook and Twitter, but difficulties remain with the use of Hootsuite (as initiated by the previous SME) to schedule postings to Instagram.

It is unclear if, or to what extent, the social media presence has resulted in new memberships. However, the Society's presence in social media does bring continuous awareness of topical issues to its followers, raising the Society's profile and the perception of its authority and insight.

A review of the use of social media by the Society was prepared for Council by Dr Ron Hacker and Heidi Wright (Wright Social) in August 2018. This review contained a number of recommendations to further the Society's objectives for social media activity in the changing social media landscape. No final decision on these recommendations had been made by 31 December 2018.

Motion: That the Directors' Report for the year ending 31 December 2018 be accepted.

Moved: David Phelps

Seconded: Cathy Waters

Carried

5. Financial Report – Don Burnside

The financial affairs of the Society remain on an adequate footing with a profit from ordinary activities of \$1,483 (2017: profit of \$52,460) and total equity/accumulated surplus of \$139,977 at 31 December 2018 (2017: \$138,494).

The Society's total equity is \$139,977 which is considered adequate to cover any liabilities.

The Society maintains appropriate systems and protocols to allow it to complete its commitments to standard reporting of its financial position as required under law.

Usually in a 'non-conference year' the normal operations of the Society result in a financial loss in that year. For the first time in several years, in 2018, the Society has delivered a small profit in a 'non-Conference year', which is an encouraging development, meaning that in future there will be a lesser reliance on conference profits to maintain financial viability. The reasons for this development are as follows.

- As described in a previous section, the new contract for the publication of *The Rangeland Journal* resulted in a reduction in the annual payment to CSIRO Publishing resulting in an annual saving of approximately \$11,000. At the same time, payment of \$20,000 was received for two Special Issues in 2018. The Society budgets for two Special Issues annually.
- There was no payment of an honorarium for the Membership Officer in 2018, resulting in a saving of \$2,500. Given the move to electronic membership renewals via the website, Council has decided that this role can be undertaken by the Finance and Audit Officer at no cost for the foreseeable future.
- The switch during 2017 from Chorus Call to Webex as the provider for tele-conferences, which are an essential requirement for the Society's operations resulted in a full year saving in 2018 estimated at \$3,000.

Other matters - Nil.

Subsequent events

No matters or circumstances have arisen since the end of the year which significantly affected or may significantly affect the operations of the Society, the results of those operations, or the state of affairs of the Society in future financial years.

Future developments

Likely developments in the operations of the Society and the expected results of those operations in future financial years have not been included in this report as the inclusion of such information is likely to result in unreasonable prejudice to the Society.

Environmental issues

The Society's operations are not regulated by any significant environmental regulation under a law of the Commonwealth or of a State or Territory.

Dividends paid, recommended and declared

Under Clause 3 of the Articles and Memorandum of Association of the Society, no dividends shall be paid to any persons who are members of the Society; consequently, no dividends have been paid or recommended.

Share capital and options

The Society is a company limited by guarantee and does not have any share capital. Consequently, no share options have been issued and none are outstanding at the end of the financial year.

Indemnification of officers and auditors

No indemnities have been given or insurance premiums paid, during or since the end of the financial year, for any person who is or has been an officer or auditor of the Society.

No person has applied for leave of Court to bring proceedings on behalf of the Society or intervene in any proceedings to which the Society is a party for the purpose of taking responsibility on behalf of the Society for all or any part of those proceedings.

The Society was not a party to any such proceedings during the year.

Motion: That the Financial Report for the year ending 31 December 2017 be accepted
Moved: Don Burnside Seconded: Kate Masters **Carried**

President David Phelps expressed a sincere thank you to Don Burnside on behalf of the Society for his roles as Finance and Audit Officer and acting Membership Officer.

6. Business Arising from Chairpersons & Financial Reports – nil

7. Elections for office bearers of the Society

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 four years and Members of Council may not serve more than two four-year terms (eight consecutive years) on Council. The Officers of the Society are President, Finance and Audit Officer and Secretary. Up to five General Council Members complete the eight-member Council. However for the 2019 AGM no members are completing their 8th term, therefore there are no council vacancies.

The following people expressed their intention to continue as ARS Council members:-

President	David Phelps	– continuing member
Secretary	Bob Shepherd	– continuing member
Finance and Audit Officer	Don Burnside	– continuing member
General Council Members	Andrew Ash	– continuing member
	Cathy Waters	– continuing member
	Dionne Walsh	– continuing member
	Angus Whyte	– continuing member
	Megan Munchenberg	– continuing member

8. Motions on notice

Motion 1 Solvency resolution (No speakers for or against)

“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: Don Burnside **Seconded:** Andrew Ash **Carried**

Motion 2 Appointment of Auditors (No speakers for or against)

“That Lee Green Strategic Accountants be appointed as The ARS auditors for 2019”

Moved: Don Burnside **Seconded:** Ron Hacker **Carried**

Motion 3 New Australian Rangeland Society Award

“That an annual Award of Excellence in Rangeland Management be established that recognises recipients who have rendered a significant contribution to the betterment of the rangelands.

Moved: Don Burnside **Seconded:** Ron Hacker **Carried**

Preamble

The ARS has only one formal award, being that of a Fellowship. The Guidelines state that a Fellowship can be awarded to:-

“Any person who has rendered or is rendering distinguished service to the Society or to the rangelands, may be appointed a Fellow of the Australian Rangeland Society by Council acting on the written nomination of not fewer than six members, submitted to Council”.

Fellowships have only been awarded to members of the Society, with the criteria including both service to the Society and to the rangelands. Further, the rules (established in 2010) require that the Fellow must have been a member of the ARS for 10 continuous years. Finally, there is a limit of the number of Fellows to 4 per cent of Society members. Including complimentary members, there are 205 members, allowing appointment of 8 Fellows at any one time. We currently have 6 Fellows, with one retired Fellow. Preparation of another nomination is underway.

These rules and their implementation limit the Society’s capacity to recognise people who are not members, but who are making or have made an outstanding contribution to rangeland science and or management. These people include pastoralists, natural park managers, traditional owners, NRM managers, environmental managers on mines, philanthropists etc.

Proposal

Establishment of an annual *Award of Excellence in Rangeland Management*. The recipient of this award shall have rendered, or is making, a significant contribution to the betterment of the rangelands.

Purpose

The Award will recognise people who have made or are making a significant contribution to rangeland management across biophysical, economic, social or governance domains. Presentation of the Award will also raise the profile of the ARS as an organisation committed to the rangelands, its people and activities.

Determination

Awards of Excellence in Rangeland Management will be given, or not given, by the Council on the basis of a written nomination (not less than 200 and not more than 500 words), which documents the contribution of the nominee to the rangelands, together with citation of not more than 100 words

for publication in ARS and other media. The nomination is to be supported by six members of the Society, two of whom must be Council members.

Criteria for the nominations

- Length of time associated with the rangelands.
- Nature of the commitment to the use and management of the rangelands.
- Unique contribution to the science and/or art of rangeland management.
- Contribution to building capacity in the rangelands community.

Process

(The process presented here is similar to that for nominating and approving the appointment of a Fellow).

- a) Any member of the Society may nominate a person for consideration for an Award of Excellence. The nomination is to be supported by evidence of meeting the criteria and endorsed by six members of the Society, two of whom must be Council members
- b) The award is to be made by Council, who may appoint a special committee to consider nominations, if they so wish. Nominations are to be assessed against the 'criteria'.
- c) Nominations can be submitted to Council at any time, but in the event that an Award is to be given, it will be announced at the subsequent AGM.
- d) Publicity can commence after the Award is announced, with the Awardee to be formally presented at their 'home location' in the company of family, colleagues and others by the nearest available Council member or their representative. This will also raise the profile of the ARS. The Awardee needs to be further recognised at the subsequent Biennial Conference.

Nature and benefit of the Award

A recipient of the Award of Excellence in Rangeland Management will receive a medal and framed certificate to be presented at their 'home location' with the winner recognised at the subsequent Biennial Conference, a year's complimentary membership of the ARS and complimentary registration of the subsequent Biennial Conference.

In return, there will be an expectation that the recipient will give a talk to the conference about their life and work related to the rangelands. Because the Conference is only held every two years, there will be up to two people receiving their Awards of Excellence at each Conference.

The presentation of the award needs to be publicised widely to raise the profile of excellence in rangeland management, and also the profile of the ARS.

Discussion

Q - Requirement for an endorsement from two (2) ARS Council members

A - The same requirement applies to the nomination of Fellows of the Society

9. General Business - nil

10. Close meeting

The President declared the 2019 AGM a success and closed the meeting at 5.40 pm (EST).