



Australasian Grain Science Association 2019 Annual General Meeting – Minutes

15:30 – 17:00 AEDT, Wednesday 28 August 2019

Sky Room, Level 4, Rydges on Swanston, Carlton VIC, Australia

Present: 32 (see attached attendee list)

Apologies: Vito Butardo (VB), Vicky Solah (VS)

Start: 15:37

1. Welcome from Chair and Chair's report (Chris Blanchard, CB)

- CB welcomed all present, noted apologies, and delivered the AGSA Chair report.
- CB acknowledged all the work everyone has done on Council. There were quite a number of changes in Council membership this year, many members had big learning curves. Everyone took to the challenge and Council is in a good position.

2. Minutes of previous (2018) AGM, and matters arising (CB)

- Minutes of the 2018 AGSA AGM have been made available on the AGSA website since October 2018.
- Matters arising from the minutes – Nil.
- **MOTION:** That the minutes of the 2018 AGSA AGM be accepted as is. Moved: CB. Seconded: Bronwyn Elliott. All in favour. Carried.

3. 2019 Conference Chair report (Joe Panozzo, JP)

- JP delivered the Conference Chair report.
- JP acknowledged the following people:
 - Scientific Committee for a good program: Cassandra Walker, Crispin Howitt, Rudi Appels, Chris Blanchard and Phil Downie.
 - Bronwyn Elliott for her hard work as sponsorship coordinator, attracting three silver sponsors and 11 exhibitors.
 - AGSA Communications Committee, Vito Butardo, Sushil Dhital, Haelee Fenton and Michelle Toutounji, for promoting the conference on various media platforms.

- Ian Wesley for his generous and timely support as webmaster.
- AGSA Treasurer (Troy Adriansz) and Secretary (Jennifer Dang) for their hard work throughout the year and during the lead up to the conference.
- The conference attracted a total of 130 registrants. AGSA had to close the registration portal since the maximum capacity for the venue was exceeded.
- Registration fees has been retained at the same figure for quite some time, because of good sponsorship.
- The venue (Rydges) was much cheaper than the alternative (RACV Club). There was a lot of space, good place for delegates to interact with exhibitors.
- To be noted for future conferences: we do not need to be in the same city to organise a conference. Most of the discussions with venue organisers was done over the phone.
- CB commented that support for AGSA conferences has been centralised, eg. AGSA Treasurer is also conference treasurer, and the AGSA website and Communications Committee help to promote the conference. This helps to take the load off the Conference Committee to allow them to concentrate on the program. We do not need a professional organiser that increases risk and cost.
- There are many conferences held in the last few weeks and upcoming weeks (Wheat Breeders Assembly, Australian Pulse Conference, Barley Technical Symposium, NIR Conference). Some of these conferences do not have an association, and are looking for a home. They would like to set up an organisation similar to AGSA just to run their conferences. CB suggested to Pulse Australia that AGSA can assist with compliance matters eg. financial and infrastructure.
- Di Miskelly asked what are the financial liability of AGSA looking after these groups.
- CB explained that AGSA would put all the same controls as we have now with AGSA. AGSA council appoints the Chair and approves the budget. In saying that they are lower risk because they have more numbers and can attract attendees. These conferences would be run separately from AGSA as they have separate entities and audiences. Discussions will occur within

Council first, then once ideas are more solid, Council will present to members for discussion at AGM.

- LOB agreed. At the moment these ideas are just thought bubbles but it is good to work cooperatively. AGSA will be the secretariat for the 2021 joint conference with the Wheat Breeders Society.
- Phil Downie suggested that AGSA could help them get support (eg. from GRDC) to provide a secretariat so that no one is disadvantaged.
- **MOTION:** That the conference Chair Joe Panozzo should be thanked and congratulated on a well organised and successful conference. Moved: Lindsay O'Brien. Seconded: Chris Blanchard (CB). All in favour.
- **MOTION:** That the Conference Chair's Report be accepted as presented. Moved: JP. Seconded: Daniel Waters. All in favour. Carried.

4. Treasurer's report (Troy Adriansz, TA)

- TA delivered the Treasurer's report.
- We have not had any more Paypal issues like we did last year. However, we had some website issues which have mostly been resolved. There will be data storage and ongoing costs.
- We have also had problems getting CB on as signatory to the AGSA accounts. We are trying to make it easier for the incoming Chair Cassandra Walker (CW) by putting her on as signatory now.
- AGSA will consolidate our three accounts into two. Will put \$300000 in fixed term account for 6 months.
- AGSA funds are currently at \$364000, the lowest this figure had ever reached was \$285000, so we are happy to put this away in a term deposit.
- TA would like to find other ways we can get people engaged in Council. There are not many people in the 25-35 age bracket in the group. We do not have people under 25 and no one from NZ on Council. Increasing the number of student travel awards may help increase attendance from the younger demographics, and then their interest in being involved on Council.
- Mike Sissons pointed out that it is the topics that will attract attendance at a conference. It would need topics selection and invitation to targeted people. Anne Bridges agreed, commenting

that the Wheat Breeders Assembly was able to attract attendance in Adelaide.

- Joe Panozzo (JP) commented that this year there are many gatherings of groups within a short period of time: AGSA, Barley Technical Symposium, Wheat Breeders Assembly, Agronomy and NIR conferences. Not many people have the budget to travel to all of those meetings.
- Bronwyn Elliott agreed with JP. It becomes difficult to attract sponsors and exhibitors when there are many other conferences going on at the same time.
- CW noted that we have attracted 130 delegates, which shows that we are capable of reaching a large number from a wide market. These numbers are exciting but it does not hurt to have a strategy to guarantee a future for AGSA.
- Chris Blanchard (CB) noted that there is a fair contraction in grain quality space in Adelaide. We should be more thoughtful about why some people aren't coming. Is it because they are not interested or not there? If not interested, then we should put some resources into attracting them here.
- Mike Gidley (MG), Awards Committee Member, commented that it is difficult with so many applicants to award the right winners. MG suggested that we should increase the number of awards. CB confirmed that Council had discussed this at the meeting prior to the AGM and have agreed to increase the number of student awards up to 10.
- TA noted that increasing the number of awards may not increase the number of attendees. It would be better to target the awards to particular groups that do not normally attend, to entice their attendance.
- Esther Callcott questioned why we have to have an age limit to the attendance or Council membership. CW commented that there is no age limit to any of the activities/membership. The only age limit imposed is on the ABB award.
- Shiwangni Rao commented that giving the student a monetary reward is good but is short-term only. Should have a student body with activities so that the students have more incentive. Eg skill development, or research fund (not just for attendance at a conference).

- CB agreed and urged the students to please engage with the incoming student member to put these ideas into action. We definitely need to do more for our students. We want to facilitate the promotion of our discipline and industry.
- Les Copeland commented that it is good to have a healthy balance financially, but raises questions as to why there is so much money when this is a non-profit organisation.
- CB agreed and added that this was a hot topic during the Council meeting on Monday 26th August. The reason for this healthy position is because of necessity in the past, and now we have a firm resource in case of emergency. Some of the things that we will do with this money are: hold annual conferences, organise student summer schools, run workshops, save for secretarial support as a contract conference organiser. We aim to break even (~80) but were lucky that we got 130. CB asked the floor if there are any other ideas for going forward with using these funds.
- Tas Westcott (TW) commented that we attract fewer and fewer international attendees. We need to lift the tone of the international side of the conference. Perhaps we can use the funds to sponsor international speakers to raise AGSA's profile. But this person must add value to AGSA. This does not have to be a full sponsorship, just a helping hand (eg. flights or accommodation). The international speaker does not have to be a student, but they should be a significant researcher.
- CB agreed and confirmed that Council has been discussing this. AGSA has signed an MoU with Cereals and Grains. Will co-support someone from C&G and vice versa. We would send out ABB or Guthrie recipient to present at C&G conference.
- Mike Sissons suggested having a separate section in AGSA budget instead of conference budget for international speakers.
- Mark Bason commented that the ICC has an international mailing list, which is great for reaching into China. Some jobs on Council are heavy and it is a good idea to have a professional accountant to check the books every year.
- Anne Bridges agreed with CB's suggestion of bringing C&G speakers to AGSA and vice versa. C&G has a program that encourages students to participate in the research program. Nabeel took part in this program and presented at these conferences as a result. C&G is very interested in doing a one-day

joint conference with AGSA. Have significant C&G member come over (eg. incoming Chair Marta Izydorczyk). C&G has created two new divisions: Pulse and Legumes, and Petfood divisions. AB also informed the floor that AACC will have a name change to C&G, but the methods will stay with AACC name.

- Les Copeland commented that there is a lot of interest from the AACC editorial group to have report from this meeting. Les will prepare a report publication in Cereal Foods World.
- **MOTION:** That the Treasurer's Report be accepted as presented. Moved: TA. Seconded: JD. All in favour. Carried.

5. **2020 Conference Update (CB)**

- We had trouble finding a home for the 2020 conference, but Crispin Howitt has kindly agreed to take this on.
- Conference will be held in Canberra in 2020. It has been a while since it has been there.
- There is little information at this stage but Crispin will update AGSA in the near future.

6. **Awards Committee Report (Lindsay O'Brien, LOB)**

- LOB delivered the Awards Committee report.
- The Committee has been reasonably active this year.
- LOB thanked Committee members Mike Gidley (MG) and Phil Downie for handling the large number of applications for student travel awards. Cassandra Walker (CW) stepped in to cover MG where there was a conflict of interest.
- LOB thanked Frank Bekes, Sushil Dhital and Haelee Fenton for being on the judging committee for the best student oral presentation, and CW, Di Miskelly and Mike Sissons for judging the poster awards.
- At the Council meeting on Monday 26th August, Council decided to increase the number of student awards from 6 to 10. We will also aim to target awardees to help attract representatives/students from institutions that are less engaged.
- This year the Bond medal will be awarded (Thursday morning). The Guthrie will be awarded next year. Call for nominations will be made in the first newsletter of 2020.
- **MOTION:** That the Awards Committee Report be accepted as presented. Moved: LOB. Seconded: CW. All in favour. Carried.

7. Communications Committee (Haelee Fenton HF and Michelle Toutounji MT)

- HF and MT delivered the Communications Committee Report.

Newsletters (HF)

- There have been 8 newsletter releases this year. Relatively low activity in terms of opening and clicking through, probably because the same information has been available on the AGSA website.
- A Scientific Communications section in the Newsletter has been added this year. This section provides an avenue for advertising the latest research, and is also available on the website.
- Job advertisements from the grains industry have been added as a new section in the Newsletter as well as on the website in the last month. Please contact the Communications Committee for pricing structure. This section is also open for conference announcements.

Website (HF)

- There have been a few issues with the website due to space limitations. Most of these have been resolved, but we will need to deal with the server load to resolve some other issues.
- HF expressed thanks to webmaster Ian Wesley (IW) for his tireless help with the website.
- After the conference, IW will take the website offline to fix some glitches.
- There is a space issue on the website. The Committee is looking at archiving old Council-related documents offline (eg. Dropbox), with permission for access granted to relevant people on Council. External storage will attract service fees.
- Tas Westcott raised concerns that the website is the only space to access old documents, and suggested that we use AGSA spare funds on extra space for the website.
- CB clarified that the documents that will be removed to an external archive are old documents that will only be relevant to Council business. Communications Committee has been tasked with deciding what stays and what goes.
- Anne Bridges suggested including a calendar on the website that shares a list of grain relevant conferences, similar to those from C&G and other organisations.

- Bronwyn Elliott agreed that duplicate copies of documents should be removed and we should invest in a Dropbox account for Council related matters. We should increase the space on the public website for items such as Guthrie and Bond addresses. BE noted that a conference list was available in previous editions of the AGSA Newsletter.

Social Media (MT)

- At the 2018 AGM, AGSA was on Facebook and Twitter. Now we also have LinkedIn and Instagram.
- Rachael Wood (RW) has been adding Instagram posts and MT has been Tweeting.
- AGSA currently has about 100 followers on Facebook. FB remains the main social media platform reaching our audience. Emails are vital in engaging students.
- CB thanked the Communications Committee and RW for doing a great job in promoting the conference.
- **MOTION:** That the Communications Committee Report be accepted as presented. Moved: HF. Seconded: Mark Bason. All in favour. Carried.

8. Methods Committee Report (Cassandra Walker, CW)

- CW delivered the Methods Committee report.
- All but five AGSA methods have been uploaded to the website for members to access.
- CW encouraged members to move away from referencing Cereal Chemistry Division methods. These are now AGSA methods.
- Instructions on how to cite AGSA methods will be available on the website as well as in upcoming Newsletters.
- Five other methods, specific to wheat and noodle testing, will go online in a few months. These include long fermentation, rapid dough, and sponge and dough methods.
- Non-members can purchase methods, priced per method, but it is much more economical to be a member to access all methods.
- **MOTION:** That the Methods Committee Report be accepted as presented. Moved: CW. Seconded: TA. All in favour. Carried.

9. Election of 3rd Ordinary Member and Student Member (CB)

- Currently Council can have up to three elected members and three co-opted members serving two-year terms each.
- We are staggering the member elections over two years so that we can have continuity.
- CB is keen to have a student member to represent the growing student membership.
- Council agreed at the meeting on Monday 26th August to have an additional elected member specifically for a student or early career researcher.
- The student member will only serve a one-year term because quite often they are in their final year of studies and we do not want to hold them back.
- The AGSA By-Laws have been amended to include Clause 8.8 relating to the student member.
- Positions vacant: 3rd Ordinary Member, Student/Early Career Member.
- Nomination for 3rd Ordinary Member: Marcus Newberry. Nomination accepted. Elected unopposed.
- Nominations for Student Member: Jesse Beasley and Nancy Saji.
- In a normal situation when there are more nominees than available positions, we would go to election. Nancy agreed prior to the AGM to withdraw her nomination. Council will most likely request her services as a Servant to Council with Social Media activities.
- This leaves only one nomination for the student member position. Jesse Beasley accepted the nomination for Student Member and was elected unopposed.
- Michelle Toutounji, current co-opted student rep and social media officer, commented that it is important to separate the roles of social media officer and student representation. This will allow the student rep to concentrate on rallying students.
- Mark Bason cautioned that Council should keep the balance of members of Council, that the Ordinary and Co-opted members should not outnumber the executives by too many.

10. MoU with AACCI (CB)

- A final version of the Memorandum of Understanding between AGSA and AACCI was displayed at the AGM. This will be signed and finalised in October 2019.

- AGSA and AACCI (C&G) will discuss ways to interact to benefit both parties.

11. New Advisory Committee (CB)

- CB would like to start a new Advisory Committee within AGSA Council, and is seeking feedback from members. This is at initial/discussion level only and has not progressed.
- CB commented that we have an amazing group of scientists and industry members, and have the potential to have an influence outside of the association, such as commenting on policies etc.
- The Committee is proposed:
- to bring together members who have a wide knowledge to comment on things related to the industry;
- to include anyone from any research or commercial organisation with interest in grains;
- to have only one representative from each organisation; and
- to provide (on Council's request) comments/feedback on matters related to grains.
- BE suggested consideration of a professional science publicist, since they can reach the science media (eg. ABC news) to raise the profile of AGSA.
- Crispin Howitt questioned if it would be better or more relevant to co-opt people at appropriate times to discuss matters/give comments rather than forming a full committee that may remain inactive for the majority of the year.
- CB replied that the preference is to have a structure we can call on at any time. But would like this to be open and transparent.
- Les Copeland (LC): There is a need to respond to issues as they arise. WE cannot choose members until we know what the issues are. Usually it is appropriate for the Chair to invite comments from all members, then Council may decide on the final response.
- Mike Gidley: Having been on national committee for Nutrition. It is good to have a forward plan, being proactive rather than reactive. A bit more work but is well worth it.
- Dan Waters (DW): Grain quality research people really benefit from lobbying government etc. so this committee will be a good vehicle. Having a proactive engagement with government and big parties will be good.

- LC: The whole research funding environment is likely to change. All open for discussion. Organisation like AGSA really needs to be aware of what's happening and have input into this.
- Anne Bridges (AB): Where do you put the line between influence and lobbying? Some organisations will not sign off on matters or even give an opinion until they know where the line is. Need to be very clear when you ask people to contribute so that there are no misunderstandings later.
- Mark Bason (MB): In some jurisdictions, if you are a tax-free organisation you may not be allowed to lobby.
- LOB: We are classified as not-for-profit (not a charity) but we are registered as a business with an ABN.
- **MOTION:** That the AGM commissions AGSA Council to develop a vision for the Advisory Committee and plan around this committee. Moved: LOB. Seconded: Mike Gidley. All in favour. Carried.

12. Other business

- Di Miskelly noted the passing of Sidi Wong, who had attended RACI CCD and AGSA conferences, and a Life Member of AGSA. Di has volunteered to write an obituary, and will also write a condolence note to be sent on behalf of AGSA and Council.
- CB expressed his condolences to Sidi's family.

13. Close

- CB thanked everyone for attending the AGM.
- With no other matters, CB closed the AGM at 17:32.