

## We are educators ... we are communicators ... we provide a service

President Jeanette Long

As my Presidency comes to an end, it is my time to reflect. What have I learnt? What has been achieved? It has been a privilege to work with so many talented and committed people whose primary aim, as a member of APEN, is to assist farm people and rural communities through our learning interactions and programs. We are educators – we build the capacity of individuals and communities. We are communicators – we share our knowledge, skills and experiences based on scientific research. We are diverse and inclusive. We provide a service to enable change in individuals, communities and industries involved in the primary industry sector and in natural resource management” (Vanclay 2006). And we do this well through cooperation and collaboration.

As a facilitator, I have developed many skills to ensure that the importance of practice is based on proven theoretical research. As adults, we often attend a training course and expect to walkout the door with all the skills to take on something new. In reality, a training course opens our eyes to all there is to know about the topic and we often leave feeling like we have a whole new journey ahead. The only way to integrate these new skills into our subconscious is to practice, practice and practice some more. We also need good constructive feedback from someone we trust who has the skills we are looking to gain; someone who is able to not only “do” the skill but also able to teach. Who can you find to mentor you to fast track those new skills? Hence, we have introduced a mentoring scheme to blend the experience of members with the youth of our emerging leaders.

We try to help overcome the vulnerability we feel when starting something new

– often we have to let go of our adult preconceived ideas. Who really who cares if we get it wrong, If it looks funny? We are not perfect or even hopeless when we start. The only person that really gets concerned about this is us. My solution is to change my frame of mind to one of “this is fun and it doesn’t matter as long as I’m learning.”

Over many years, the Management Committee has been gathering lots of ideas and best practice for things that matter so that the voices of our member are heard in places where decisions are made. I have been fortunate that during my term as President the Management Committee has worked diligently to build on the achievement of previous committees. To my partners, Graham, Donna, Anthony, Chrissy, Lisa, Mike, Rebecca, Warren, Maryse, Pat and especially Roe (whose amazing memory and professionalism keep us a on track with best governance and my diary), I express my gratitude. There are so many advantages of doing things together.

Although I am stepping down as President, I hope to continue my input as a Director of the company. Leadership is about leading a team to go somewhere to make a positive difference. It has been a challenging year as we progress to become a company. The ‘new’ APEN team will continue to foster positive working relationship as we continue on the next stage of our journey.

I am looking forward to catching up with many of you at the conference in Townsville.

**Warm regards,  
Jeanette Long**



### IN THIS ISSUE

<b><i>We are educators ... we are communicators ... we provide a service</i></b>	
<i>President Jeanette Long</i>	<b>1</b>
<b><i>Across the Editor’s Desk</i></b>	<b>2</b>
<i>Pat Hamilton</i>	
<b><i>Here Comes APEN Ltd</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<i>Austin McLennan</i>	
<b><i>Meet Emma Jackson – Changing landscapes in far North Queensland</i></b>	<b>4</b>
<b><i>Water your landscape – not your roads!</i></b>	<b>5</b>
<i>Lisa Stevens</i>	
<b><i>Responding to changing seasons, climate, people &amp; markets in WA</i></b>	<b>6</b>
<i>Danielle England</i>	
<b><i>Regional Roundup</i></b>	<b>8</b>
<b><i>New Members</i></b>	<b>11</b>
<b><i>Contact Details</i></b>	<b>12</b>

# ACROSS THE EDITOR'S DESK



This issue of ExtensionNet draws on the collective views and experiences of a diverse group of people who live in different locations across Australia and New Zealand – all working hard to make a difference. They share with us their thoughts about various situations and the challenges faced. They share with us who they are and how their experiences have shaped and influenced what is happening around them.

Jeanette Long in SA reflects on her presidency and what she has learnt.

Emma Jackson, from far north Queensland, stresses the importance of the balance between land and people, culture, diversity and history and our personal wellbeing. Emma believes that the future of a region does not lie in the hands of leaders, but in those who inspire, direct, guide and gain respect - [qualities, I believe, we do want to see in leaders].

Danielle England from WA tells us that farmers are here for the long term as they tackle the changing seasons. Dani's observation of KASA changes is most heartening.

Austin McLennan from his desk in NT takes us through the transition of APEN into a company.

Lisa Stevens in SA poses the question why develop a DVD to tackle the practical know how of maintaining roads and tracks – such positive feedback on a concern of many farmers.

APEN's Regional Coordinators, some who are 'retiring' share with us some important happenings near you. I am sure that you will enjoy meeting some of our new members.

There has been such a large influx of members since the last issue that we only have the space to share a few. Please look at the list and make someone welcome.

Making contact is a great way of sharing the history and the future. It is also a great opportunity for everyone to take the time to reflect on their own journey by looking inward, looking outward and looking inward again.

I sometimes refer to Gibbs' (1998) reflective cycle to guide me through six stages of reflection:

1. Description: what happened	What, where and when? Who did/said what, what did you do/read/see hear? In what order did things happen? What were the circumstances? What were you responsible for?
2. Feelings: what were you thinking about?	What was your initial gut reaction, and what does this tell you? Did your feelings change? What were you thinking?
3. Evaluation: what was good or bad about the experience?	What pleased, interested or was important to you? What made you unhappy? What difficulties were there? Who/ what was unhelpful? Why? What needs improvement?
4. Analysis: what sense can you make of the situation?	Compare theory and practice. What similarities or differences are there between this experience and other experiences? Think about what actually happened. What choices did you make and what effect did they have?
5. Conclusion: what else could you have done?	What have you learnt for the future? What else could you have done?
6. Action Plan: what will you do next time?	If a similar situation arose again, what would you do?

Once again, I encourage you to listen, to learn and to share. And to those conference attendees – network to expand your horizons and be inspired to implement what you learn.

Warm regards  
Pat Hamilton

Experience has taught us that it is best to move forward when the heart and the head are connected; by saying yes to opportunity and supporting other people to achieve their potential.

*Elizabeth Broderick*

# Here Comes APEN Limited!

## Getting ready to vote for a new APEN Constitution and Management Structure at the upcoming AGM



Austin McLennan

As all members are hopefully aware by now, at a Special General Meeting of APEN members earlier this year, a resolution was passed to transition APEN away from its present Incorporated Association status (as APEN Inc.) into a Company Limited by Guarantee (APEN Ltd). As part of these structural changes, it was also recognised that the APEN Constitution would need to be modified to suit the new company structure.

Since then, Past President Austin McLennan and a specially-formed subcommittee have been leading the effort to update the APEN constitution in time for ratification at our Annual General Meeting to be held at the APEN International Conference in Townsville next month.

The proposed Constitution for APEN Ltd is available from the APEN website: <http://www.apen.org.au/LiteratureRetrieve.aspx?ID=207348>.

While this new document largely follows the existing APEN constitution, the most significant changes relate to a number of new arrangements for the future oversight and management of APEN.

These proposed arrangements can be summarised as follows:

### 1. That the overall management structure of APEN shall consist of the following bodies and offices:

- **A skills-based Board of 5-9 Directors responsible for overall management of the Company**, from which the following officers will be drawn:
  - President
  - Vice-President
  - Treasurer
  - Secretary
- **A Permanent Committee of elected Regional Coordinators (1 per region) called the Regional Activities Committee (RAC)** who will assist the Board in implementing strategy and regional activities and events, as well as advising the Board on regional issues and interests
- **Two other Board-appointed officers** with no Director responsibilities
  - Editor in Chief, Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal
  - Editor, ExtensionNet

- Any other staff, contractors, subcommittees and/or member volunteers such as are deemed essential to the effective management of APEN.
- 2. The majority of the APEN Directors will be elected directly by the membership, though the Board will have some capacity to appoint additional Directors dependent upon the needs of the Board at the time.
- 3. The Board of Directors will be responsible for the APEN's Strategic Direction, Corporate Governance, and the appointment of any staff or contractors including the Company Secretary and/or a Chief Executive Officer.
- 4. The Regional Coordinators will be responsible for driving the on-ground activities of APEN within their regions.
- 5. References to "Clusters" and "Cluster Coordinators" in the current Constitution have been removed but the roles retained as a means of organising events and activities among members who are grouped either geographically or share a common area of interest.
- 6. The current APEN Secretariat shall take on the role of Company Secretary.

So, how does that sound to you?

We are interested in your feedback so please get back to us as soon as possible, so we can have it ready for the September AGM. We have already received a number of helpful suggestions from eagle-eyed members!

The constitution is available both in PDF and as a Word version. If you wish to make any comments or suggested changes, please use track changes in the Word version and return your copy to the APEN Secretariat or contact Austin McLennan at [ajmprofessionalservices@gmail.com](mailto:ajmprofessionalservices@gmail.com).

*Austin is the Immediate Past President of APEN with extensive experience research, in Queensland and the Northern Territory. He has been motivated along the way by a colleague that "individuals need to take responsibility for their own professional organisation and put their hands up to shape it". The organisation appreciates Austin's hard work in bringing together APEN Ltd.'s Constitution.*



# Changing landscapes in far North Queensland

Meet Emma Jackson



Emma Jackson and Barney

## My youth

I climbed trees and I loved martial arts. I loved playing with the boys and I really loved my pushbike. I loved the sun and I adored the snow. I stayed out as late as I possibly could and I thoroughly enjoyed school, but have I any interesting stories to share? Not really. I lived every second to the fullest and made sure I was opportunistic. I was the first to put my hand up and the last to walk away. Determined, driven and passionate...and that has never left me.

## What I learnt

My drive and attitude has seen me travel the world, work in so many industries and with a variety of people. I have learnt that the more people you experience, then the wider your perspective. The more places you visit, the more culture you taste, then the more you understand in the world. The jigsaw starts to make sense and the power of global technology starts to have relevance in this era. Through technology, relationships can be maintained, friendships develop and global communities and groups with similar ideals are brought together. Business becomes easier and communication less complex and expensive, no matter the isolation or proximity to essential services, neighbours or businesses.

## Settling down

Arriving in Australia, from Manchester, UK, fifteen years ago as a backpacker, I married my grazier hubby and now have four gorgeous children. Teaching the children is my daily role but outside of this I run the business side of the station, volunteer with local community groups and try to be that 'behind the scenes' person, who works and advocates for the good of the region. I am known for being that honest extrovert who forms honest trusting relationships, and builds on my contacts to help the decision-makers understand what the best

interests of this region are. I love people and I especially love children. We live in a part of the world, which is beautiful. However, it is under threat and I believe to maintain the beauty, of both the land and the people, we need both to work, hand in hand. There must be the balance between the land and people, culture, diversity and history, but without personal wellbeing, we have nothing. And that is where it all interlinks.

## Influencing change up north

I am working hard to enhance industry opportunities in far north Queensland, by opening gates to wider markets. I am pulling groups and agencies together, to communicate and share skills and resources and I am working hard every year, to instil into the region, how life is a challenge, but that it is ok. Mental health is as real as physical health, yet not discussed nearly as widely enough. In remote Australia, it is extremely challenging to receive physical or emotional help and so, instead of advocating for more help, I am working on that mind-set. Let's influence how we perceive mental health and personal challenges to be. Let's look at the factors that are influencing the individual's mindset and bring people together, to work through it all.

## A typical day?

A typical day is my world does not exist, which I why I love the life I lead. A typical day should be go to my gym, take the girls horse riding, teach them school, do some business, cook tea, put the kiddies to bed and sleep. However it has several hundred other little elements to it. But I love that.

I am one of those people who is not brilliant at anything. I don't excel in any area and I must work hard to become 'ok' at something, but that makes me human and gives me the ability to empathise, understand and relate to so many

others, on so many different levels. I can work with anyone and will help everyone with their goals and achievements. I believe nothing is impossible and everything deserves a shot. I make mistakes, I cry and I get disappointed but this just keeps on driving me harder.

## Achieving change in my community

Sincerity and integrity are what influence change and brings in a range of support from local families, businesses, government agencies and the like. When hard working, committed people believe you have their best interests and the interests of the region as a priority, they support and walk with you. They trust in my direction and value the outcomes.

## Shaping the future

My dream is to provide opportunities to a range of people, who never thought they would succeed at anything. All those children out there who don't fit into the regular education system, who struggle to find their niche or who don't recognise opportunity, could be working with me and I will be providing them with a future. My children and the hubby are my absolute world but to be able to help and teach others to recognise what this amazing world has to offer, is my dream. No child, or adult, should ever feel like a failure and every single human has a right to a solid, happy life. I want to give people that.

I have this ability to sit back and watch, whilst gently influencing and encouraging parallels to form. The future of a region does not lie in the hands of the leaders, but in those who inspire, direct, guide and gain respect. This role, which I have moved into across the region, is one which every region needs. It is a role that draws in every channel of communication; a role where others are committed to supporting me. I have become a positive, respected role of power and influence, behind the scenes, and yet no one really sees it happening.

... And I am only just beginning...

## Regards

Emma Jackson

In addition to her numerous activities, such as Chair of Cape York Natural Resource Management, Secretary for the Weipa Live Export Group, Rural Fire & Royal Flying Doctor Service, the property has over 3000 cattle and they breed Brahman cattle.

In 2016, Emma brought together nearly 100 people in Cape York to "Conquer the Corrugations" a walk of forty-two kilometres on rough corrugated dirt roads to highlight mental health awareness.

What an impressive change agent!

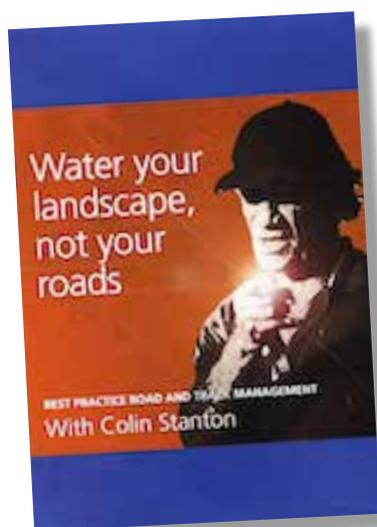


# Water your landscape - not your roads!

Lisa Stevens, SA Regional Coordinator

Soil conversation is a topical issue in most of Australia, and here in northern South Australia it is no different. With funding from the Australian Government's National Landcare Program and SA Arid Lands NRM Board, Natural Resources SA Arid Lands has put together the 'Water your landscape, not your roads: Best Practice Road and Track Maintenance' DVD aimed at tackling this big issue.

This DVD combines practical on-ground strategies to maintain, in our case, pastoral country and keep it from being dehydrated.



**So why a DVD?** We were looking for something fresh and 'outside the box' in terms of natural resources management products. We have the usual factsheets and regional newsletter but we wanted something different. What hadn't our landholders seen before? The answer was a DVD. Yes there had been similar produced before, but nothing that interviewed landholders and made them a part of the process and reflected their country and their issues.

The idea for the DVD came about because not all landholders could attend the advertised Soil Conservation workshops that were held throughout the region, but the demand was still high for this information. So we sat down and thought about how to get out our information to a wider audience. It wasn't feasible to send our workshop contractor to over 200 pastoral properties in the region. We needed another way. The DVD presented the most convenient and cost effective choice.

**So why not a thumb drive; that's what everyone else does?**

For this we looked to our own habits. Because thumb drives are small they get lost, misplaced or take up residence at the bottom of your bag, or hide in a draw somewhere – not to mention that because they are handy storage facilities, information can be overwritten. This was not

what we wanted. We needed something that was visually attractive, big enough that it can't get lost and easy to watch. Not everyone in the SA Arid Lands community uses a computer to watch videos, but we knew our audience all had televisions and DVD players. This meant that the whole family could sit down and watch the DVD instead of huddling around a computer monitor.

## The development of the DVD

While making the DVD we kept our audience in mind and worked out the best way to connect with them. As with any work we produce whether it be factsheets, a Facebook post or a DVD we needed to know our audience and cater for all types of learners. We had a detailed script that provided the factually based information we wanted to share but it was filmed fairly informally and we allowed the workshop deliverer to be as natural as he wanted to be. This meant that the information wasn't just dry and boring, but more fitting with the pastoral community. We also provided real on property examples and interviewed landholders who had implemented soil conservation work on their property - to show what can be achieved. We interviewed landholders after the workshops so it was they who provided the feedback, recommendations and shared their learnings – not just the staff.

The primary focus of the DVD was the practical know how of maintaining roads and tracks. We filmed the machinery doing the work, visually instructing the watcher on what to do and then supporting that vision with text explanations and voice-overs. To compliment this, the DVD also has a Soil Conservation manual attached for landholders to print out themselves or refer to when needed.

## What was the end result?

After filming, our videographer had over 100 hours of footage to edit down to just under an hour. We then added animations and finally the cover art tied it all together. If you would like a copy please contact me at [Lisa.Stevens@sa.gov.au](mailto:Lisa.Stevens@sa.gov.au).

## So did we hit the mark?

Copies of this DVD have gone out far and wide and to almost every state and territory in Australia and through our comprehensive communications plan we hope to keep on delivering this product to those that need it.

So far the feedback we've received from our own landholders is that it is one of the best things the SA Arid Lands NRM Board has produced. Can't get better feedback than that!

*Lisa, based in Port Augusta, is the Regional Landcare Facilitator in the SA Arid Lands Region where she connects people with best practice techniques and new types of innovation.*



Lisa Stevens

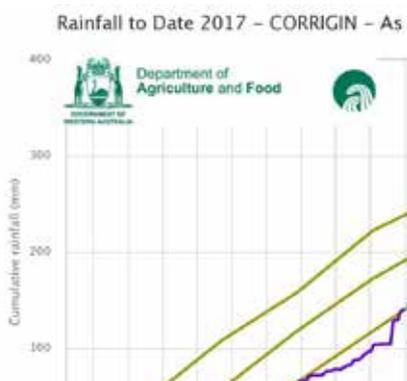
# Responding to changing seasons, climate, people and markets - a WA perspective

Danielle England, AgInnovate, Narrogin

This season has been below decile 1 for much of Western Australia's mixed farming areas. On-farm this has meant that in the good areas only 60-75% of the cropping program went in (for other areas it has meant as little as 10-20% was planted); while the pastures are extremely short and most areas will be feeding sheep until the season break in 2018.

As an extension agent, it has been interesting to note how the agricultural industry and their communities have responded to this season, potentially the worst in 70 years. Rainfall wise, it has been as bad, if not worse than the 2006/2007 and 2012/2013 seasons. Yet, the general response has been less stressed and there is a feeling of almost calm about how the season has panned out.

Figure 1: Rainfall to date 2017 – Corrigin  
Note the 2017 growing season rainfall has been 140mm (since April), average (April - mid-August) is ~213mm



The season has been coupled with low grain prices and high livestock prices. Using the Grain and Graze 3 Agricultural Price Guide ([agprice.grainandgraze3.com.au](http://agprice.grainandgraze3.com.au)), in WA, during June 2016, most grain prices were at decile 3, while 19 micron wool was at decile 9, trade lambs at decile 7, and live sheep at decile 8. These prices are having an impact on the focus mixed farmers are putting on each of their enterprises, although this decision is coupled with considerations around machinery investment, the cost of restocking, and seasonal availability of feed. The positive response to the 2017 season demonstrates there has been some practice change over the past 10 years in the ways in which the WA mixed farming industries respond to changing seasons, climate, people and markets. I believe this response is the end result of years of continued RDE investment into late breaks, moisture conservation, advanced decision making

tools and a targeted approach to industry capacity building (both farmers and advisors) around changing climate. (Please note that this is only my observation and that a formal evaluation has not occurred.)

**So how has the WA mixed farming industry (its people) responded to the 2017 season? And what role has research and extension activities played in this response?**

**What KASA changes have been observed?**

<p><b>Knowledge</b></p>	<p>Farmers and advisors now have a better understanding of the decile system of growing season rainfall (10 = top 10% of recorded rainfall: 1 = lowest 10% recorded rainfall); and what this means in the paddock regarding on-farm decisions. This information comes from a trusted source, and is easily and freely available.</p> <p>Farmers have become a lot better at making decisions around the time of sowing. Feeling confident to pull paddocks out of crop, swapping crop varieties, and varying cropping inputs according to the season. The advisory community has also responded during this time to provide assistance at this critical decision point of the season. As such the downside risk of the cropping enterprise has been reduced.</p>
<p><b>Attitude</b></p>	<p>Farmers are here for the long term. They understand that one season does not dictate what they are like as a farmer. They know they can expect a poor season at least one in three (in the low rainfall zone) and one in eight (in the medium rainfall zone). You plan for it and move on.</p> <p>Farmers and advisors now know they can control cropping inputs, and have a multitude of tools and information sources to make those decisions. They can control how much crop to plant, cropping inputs, and even sowing metrics (such as rates, depths and timing). We are no longer feeling like we are 'at the mercy of the season'.</p> <p>This attitude is being supported by the advisory community, who are using all the tools available and the learnings from the past 10 years to support the on-farm decision making of WA mixed farmers.</p>
<p><b>Skills</b></p>	<p>Industry skills in long-range forecasting have also improved. We are now a lot more confident in our predictions, and have the tools to assist us to do this. There are now skilled government and private advisors in this area.</p> <p>Sowing technology means that we are a lot better at placing the seed into moisture, and no-till means that soil moisture is conserved until the growing season.</p> <p>Tools such as Yield Prophet are assisting advisors and growers alike to make in-season decisions regarding in-crop nutrition. Providing targeted information to assist with in-paddock decision making.</p>
<p><b>Aspirations</b></p>	<p>Farmers enjoy what they do, and continue to look towards growing better crops and pastures and turning-off better lambs. They want to provide for their families and be a part of a vibrant community. Mixed farming provides for this, and they are here for the long haul.</p>

### What activities have contributed to this?

This season the extension response has come from a number of different industry players.

- Farming systems groups have organised community breakfast BBQs, late break walks and social events.
- Department of Primary Industries and Regional Development have coordinated late break/dry season workshops for livestock producers across the state in cooperation with the Sheep's Back (the AWI funded extension network in WA).
- In-paddock crop walks have been hosted across the state by private advisors (as a part of their normal delivery)
- General one-on-one support has continued from private advisors around supplementary feeding livestock and crop management.

Apart from the late break workshops for livestock producers, this list of 'extension type' activities would be a part of the normal delivery by most advisors and farming systems groups.

### So why the change in reaction?

I can't say for sure. It is definitely a mix of experience (we're getting good at this now), new research to provide us with better knowledge and tools, and I can't help but think that perhaps a well-planned and well-executed (although expensive) drought extension project has something to do with it.

Between 2010 and 2012, as a part of a larger Drought Pilot Project jointly funded by the Australian and West Australian Governments, over 400 farm businesses participated in the "Farm Business Resilience Program". It was a part of a larger suite of activities that aimed to reform drought measures in the State.

This pilot program linked farmers, advisors and researchers through a series of 5 workshops leading farm businesses through the development of a farm business plan. The workshops covered issues such as climate change, farm succession, natural resource management, marketing and terms of trade, farm budgeting and family communication. They were then followed-up with a one-on-one 'kitchen table' session where the business plan was finalised. Designed and managed by Curtin University (and then the Department of Primary Industries and Resources), it used an adaptive management process to pull all this information and learning together.

As you'd expect, most farmers did not look at their plan much after it was developed, but my experience 5 years later is that most have achieved everything they had planned (going to show that even by writing it down you give yourself a greater chance of achieving it). But it was some of the other in-built drought resilience capabilities that were developed during this time have come home to roost. Things like regular family breaks (just getting away) and the knowledge that we're all in this together really make a difference.

No two seasons are the same. Each season teaches us something different about how we

respond to change. Yet at the same time those extension KPIs keep coming back to remind me of how important agricultural extension is. Nothing beats good local networks; building activities from the ground up; providing skilled advisors on the ground to support change on-farm, one-on-one.

### More information

Heath, R. 2017, Evaluating the effect of a pilot drought policy measure on farmer practices and behaviour, Curtin University

Keogh, M., Granger, R. and Middleton, S. 2011, Drought Pilot Review Panel: a review of the pilot of drought reform measures in Western Australia 2011, Australian Government Department of Agriculture, Fisheries and Forestry.

*Danielle England is a part of AgInnovate; a national team of extension specialists enabling change in the agricultural industries. Danielle has over 20 years' experience working with farmer groups, industry bodies and research organisations designing and delivering extension programs*

*Most recently Danielle has been a part of the Grains Research and Development Corporation (GRDC) funded Grain and Graze delivery team, working with researchers and advisors to deliver mixed farming extension activities across Western Australia. She is currently working with Charles Sturt University to develop a national mixed farming program for Meat and Livestock Australia (MLA); and is Extension Coordinator for the MacKillop Farm Management Group in SA.*

*She has a Bachelor of Agribusiness Marketing (Curtin University) with first class honours in rural leadership, and a Graduate Diploma in Rural Systems Management (Rural Extension) (University of Queensland).*



Danielle England



Sheep feeding trail, Narrogin, May 2017



# Regional Roundup

## NSW/ACT

### Regional Co-ordinator Dr Anthony Kachenko



In writing my final Regional Coordinator report, I reflect on the past 24 months

of activities and share my perspective on what has been and what will be. During this period, the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN) has gone from strength to strength with a dedicated management committee, passionate staff and proactive members. It has been extremely rewarding for me personally, transitioning from a 'passive' member to a proactive contributor.

Over the past twelve months I have worked with other committee members on a number of structural changes that I truly believe will position APEN favourably into the future. Change is inevitable and should be enthusiastically embraced. The old adage, 'if it ain't broke, don't fix it' will not ensure success in times where there is rapid change, driven by technology and digital disruption. Individuals and organisations of all sizes must embrace this change to prosper, or quite simply, they will be left behind. As an extension professional, we should always be challenging ourselves and others to improve, set ambitious goals and seek feedback.

A key change for APEN has been the move to register the organisation as a Company Limited by Guarantee. This structural change came about after much analysis due to a variety of reasons including the need to meet legal compliance requirements whilst strengthen the public perception of the organisation. The Management Committee felt this would be a key part of the evolution of APEN in order for it to meet the needs of its membership into the future. This move was unanimously passed at a Special General Meeting earlier this year and will be ratified at the Annual General Meeting in September.

Running in parallel with this significant structural change has been the need to modernise and strengthen the APEN Constitution. This document has been updated to reflect the new APEN Structure and will also be ratified at the Annual General Meeting. This process has been undertaken in a consultative manner with input sought from the broader membership. There has been some great feedback on the document already, and no doubt there will be some further hearty discussion when it goes to a vote in a few weeks' time.

At the Annual General Meeting, I will be stepping down from the Regional Coordinator role, however my time with APEN is far from over as I have nominated to sit on the APEN Board in 2017/2018. I thank all those who have participated on the management committee and look forward to maintaining friendship with those who are stepping down.

There is much more to be done on a number of fronts with emphasis on aligning future APEN strategy and membership needs with

organisational growth opportunities off the back of the new structure and constitution (pending membership endorsement). APEN will continue to grow, change, challenge itself to position itself favourably for its members into the future. I look forward to contributing to this into the future.

## NT

### Regional Co-ordinator Dr Warren Hunt NT



As I reflect on the completion of my term as the Northern Territory representative on the APEN Management Committee, I can see that the organisation is embarking on an interesting new journey in the narrative of the Extension discipline. In the 1990s, APEN served initially as the sole professional entity to lift up and further develop and refine the business of Extension in our region. Little did most of us know in the early days of APEN, the impacts of the profound changes wrought in the agricultural innovation systems in Australia and New Zealand and how they would dismantle the existing structures and processes of agri-innovation. Those frameworks were rapidly altered or torn down by a range of public policy decisions that would last a generation. An old paradigm of research and extension systems had passed away and I think it's fair to say is likely never to return.

APEN, therefore, became not just a body dedicated to the professional development of its peerage, but also a sanctuary, a repository of skills and expertise, of knowledge and process, that could be retained and I believe is now again beginning to gain credibility and acceptance as investors in the agri-innovation, NRM and community sectors begin to recognise the essential nature of successfully interfacing with stakeholders, clients and communities.

The upcoming APEN-GFRAS 2017 International Conference in Townsville is testimony to this. We have 84 accepted abstracts with diversity from across the globe showing extension working to apply science in production agriculture, natural resource management, governance and policy considerations, addressing gender-based issues in both developed and developing nations – especially in areas transitioning out of conflict, as well as valuable strategies discussing the mechanics of effective program implementation and evaluation. Not so long ago, a number of us were beginning to feel like we had been relegated to the dustbin of agri-history. However, we are now seeing something of a renaissance of the discipline in a more pluralistic sense of organisation.

What is heartening though is that the future has not emerged from either just the public sphere (though it is seeing a resurgence in some jurisdictions of the public and industry need), nor is the new bastion to be found solely in the private sector (though the opportunities

are growing there too). I believe we are seeing, as evidenced from this conference, the role and function of non-government, university and industry institutions playing a pivotal role in services delivery. How the different players in this evolution can act effectively and profitably in parallel will be a challenge – but that's what makes life interesting.

I have enjoyed the MC role – especially being on the APEN-GFRAS 2017 organising committee. My career is turning me in a few different directions at present and I need to focus on those priorities. Also, I think it is time for a more youthful NT extension practitioner with different perspectives to have a go. I think APEN is about to enter the big league with our 2017 International conference. I think things will get even more exciting from here on.

Regards,

Warren Hunt

## Queensland

### Regional Co-ordinator Graham Harris



As your Regional Co-ordinator (RC) I'd like to thank you all for your support over the past three years. In particular, I'd like to thank Ann Starasts and Gerry Roberts, our two Queensland Cluster Coordinators, for their service. Together we surveyed the Queensland members and received excellent feedback and ideas which we have been endeavouring to implement.

Being your RC has provided me with the opportunity to expand my professional extension networks, both nationally and internationally. I have found participation in the Management Committee a great way to input into the direction of the extension profession and encourage members to seriously consider putting your hand up as a regional coordinator, cluster coordinator or Director on the proposed APEN Board.

I intend stepping down as the Regional Coordinator for Queensland at the September AGM, and nominating for a position as Director on the proposed APEN Board. Already there has been interest from some Queensland APEN members to nominate for the RC role which is excellent. The RC will meet regularly with other RCs as part of the proposed Regional Activities Committee in the new APEN structure. As a sub-committee of the Board they will be responsible for the delivering activities and events for APEN members across all APEN Regions.

It would be great also to have members volunteering to take on Cluster Coordinator roles across our state. Ideally, we need at least four Cluster co-ordinators for Queensland – ones for north Queensland, central Queensland, south-east Queensland and south-west Queensland. If you are interested in these roles please contact me or the new RC after our AGM.

# Regional Roundup

In September, Queensland will be hosting the 2017 GFRAS/APEN International Conference. There has been great work done by the Conference Committee ably led by Lawrence Di Bella. I'm looking forward to attending what looks to be a fantastic conference and catching up with many of you who will be attending.

As always, you look back and wish you had been able to do more. But it must be remembered that we all have various roles in our work and private life, and it is important to get the balance right.

Graham Harris

Queensland Regional Co-ordinator

## South Australia Regional Co-ordinator Lisa Stevens



### Reflections from SA

As APEN moves to being a company, it is a good time to reflect on my journey with APEN.

My involvement with APEN began in 2011 in Armidale where I was the recipient of the "Fast Tracking the Next Generation of Regional Change Professional" sponsorship. As the recipient of this sponsorship, I was provided with APEN membership, an opportunity to present a poster at the APEN conference and access to the 2011 mentorship program. It was this mentorship program that led me into the path of Jeanette Long, our current presiding member, and a mentorship program that really influenced my professional development.

APEN has given me the opportunity to gain a suite of new skills many of which I have directly applied to my various job roles. The wide and varying networking opportunities have been priceless. The Management Committee and sub-committee members all volunteer their time and their sharp minds to keep this organising working well.

The calibre of people involved in APEN never ceases to amaze me and the only advice I could give would be to get involved, to support the roadshows, attend the conferences, join a sub-committee and to take the plunge and be regional representative – the skills and networks gained by these experiences are very rewarding.

The future looks good.

Regards

Lisa Stevens

## Tasmania Regional Co-ordinator Donna Lucas



I've been reflecting about the range of videos that have been produced by extension projects recently.

APEN hosted a webinar on the topic in August last year. Tonia and Paul Grundy explained the pros and cons of using videos as well as some tips and tricks. If you missed the webinar, watch

the recording here: <http://www.apen.org.au/announcements/2016-apen-webinars>

While we all have different learning styles, we are all visual learners. 80% of what we learn is visual. People prefer a short video than to read text. When you watch videos do you find yourself abstracting about the concepts or thinking of ideas for your own extension projects?

With the growth of social media videos have become more important and more widely used. They can be easily cross-promoted via social media and electronic articles e.g. newsletters. Here are a few examples.

### War of the Worms

This is an example from overseas, from the Moredun Research Institute. It's a video highlighting the key messages for sustainable worm control in livestock. I recently visited the Moredun Institute in Edinburgh. Their website is worth a visit (<https://www.moredun.org.uk>). They conduct research on animal diseases, develop vaccines for veterinary chemical companies and also play a key role in knowledge exchange in the UK.

Link to video: <https://youtu.be/nV71tbKCKhE>



### Red Meat Updates Tasmania - Virtual Farm Tour 2017

Red Meat Updates is an annual conference for the Tasmanian red meat industry (<https://redmeatupdates.com>). A producer-led working group develops the program. Group members include APEN members Tony Butler, Mel Rae and Penny Hooper. This year the virtual farm tour visited William and Melissa Fergusson's Grindstone Bay Pastoral property at Triabunna, on Tasmania's east coast. Watch the video to hear about their business, the challenges they face and strategies they have implemented to make their business resilient. Link to virtual farm tour: <https://vimeo.com/219043278>



### Soil Wealth and Integrated Crop Protection - Achievements Phase 1

This video reports the achievements of a three-year national extension project for the vegetable industry funded by Hort Innovation. It is an example of using video for reporting achievements. The project also delivered a range of videos on specific topics and case study vegetable businesses which can be found on the Soil Wealth Integrated Crop Protection website, [www.soilwealth.com.au/resources/](http://www.soilwealth.com.au/resources/)

Link to phase 1 achievements video: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=gkRsEL6O6ZE>



Regards,  
Donna Lucas

## Victoria Regional Co-ordinator Mike Weise



This will be my last newsletter item for APEN as I retire from my Regional Coordinator role. We aren't able to announce my replacement as none of the members I've spoken to about the role feel they can take it up. Maybe you can grab this enjoyable role.

About four years ago, APEN started a piece of work to recruit new members. Initial contact with groups made up of Extension specialists were slow to deliver members instantly as relationships had to be built and business cases for investing in teams joining APEN were considered. This month one of those relationships bore fruit again and 24 members joined APEN from the Dairy Industry.

So welcome to the following Victorian APEN members, I hope your memberships proves valuable to your practise change endeavours Louise Sunderland, Karen Romano, Donna Gibson, Irene Baker, Leah Maslen, Allan Cameron, Lisa Birrell, Ross Read, Lachlan Barnes, Sarah Thompson, Lisa Menhenett, Jenny Wilson, Michelle Muir, Heidi Van Es, Lindsay Ferguson, Will Bredin, Sam Oakden, Shane Hellwege, Tracy Lloyd, Sally Roberts, Cath Leschen, Laurie Hickey, Peter Gaffy, Harriet Bowden

Adios  
Mike

# Regional Roundup

## **WA** Regional Co-ordinator **Rebecca Wallis**



As my time on the APEN Management Committee nears its end, I reflect on the opportunities this great organisation has provided me. I joined the Management Committee (MC) after attending my first APEN conference in New Zealand in 2013. The WA position had been vacant for some time and a few colleagues convinced me to give it a go. So I jumped right in and was supported by an amazing committee that not only supported my development in the MC role, but in my career in extension.

I had roles in supporting the APEN Roadshows, Social Media and was on the SA Conference Committee. APEN has provided networks and connections that I would not have otherwise had been exposed to - particularly nationally and internationally.

I would strongly encourage anyone to get involved through APEN's events, communications, conferences and committees. And, as I move on to other endeavours in my life, I will always be grateful for what APEN has provided me and will look forward to staying involved as a member for many years to come.

For our WA members, we are currently seeking to fill a position on the Regional Activities Committee to help ensure the WA network stays connected and upskilled in the profession of extension delivery. Please consider this great opportunity to build your extension networks and skills.

Regards  
Rebecca Wallis

## **New Zealand** Regional Co-ordinator **Chrissy Stokes**



Here in New Zealand, it's been a very wet winter, with flooding, slips and weather-related drama from north to south. Farmers and growers are finding conditions challenging, and with lots of political discussion about water taxes and water quality, many in the primary industries are concerned about both their social license to operate, and the costs of running their farming or growing business.

As extension agents, the role we can take in this type of environment is to help our farmers unpick exactly what the issues are, and to help them navigate their way through challenging situations. Sometimes these conversations can be pretty difficult, but that makes them even more important.

Lately I've been thinking a lot about how I can help the orchardists I work with to face some significant changes to the way they do business. I see that our role is to help producers to make confident decisions in their businesses, whatever those decisions are about – succession, expansion, changing land use, any number of things. After all, our work is all about facilitating change.

Cheers,  
Chrissy Stokes

If we want to change the future, it's a lot easier to do before it happens. Stories make powerful magic to help us do that.

*Marti, 2017*

# New APEN members

APEN continues to grow as we welcome recently joined members from around the country and overseas. It is a great opportunity for other member to connect and share experiences with them.



## Jacob Betros (NT)

Since graduating with a Bachelor of Environmental Management (Natural Systems and Wildlife) in 2009, I have undertaken roles which have developed skills in:

- Not-for-profit organisations;
- Government departments; and
- Private Consulting.

These opportunities have given me the chance to develop a broad range of environmental and natural resource management skills, while adapting my communication skills appropriately against ever changing clients and audiences. Working in Central QLD for over 7 years, I have had the opportunity to undertake environmental projects focusing on agricultural, tourism, industry, mining, conservation, and development.

I continually seek challenges to further my knowledge and understanding of environmental processes and practices. Professionally, I would like to help people help the environment by engaging the community and landowners in better understanding the biodiversity of their surrounds and how to protect and enhance it. Now working in Darwin, as the Northern Territory Regional Landcare Facilitator, I have the opportunity to work with primary producers to get a balance that leads to both economic and sustainable benefits. NRM today is about the people who work on the land, and their ability to be resilient and agile.



## Lili Usher Chandler (QLD)

My name is Lili Usher-Chandler and my life goal is to strengthen the relationship between people and the environment so that both receive benefits to coexistence.

In 2016, I finished a Bachelor of Advanced Science, majoring in zoology and ecology. In August 2017, I have been working as a Forestry Extension Officer Trainee at Private Forestry Service Queensland.

I am a passionate and dedicated person who wants to create positive change. I, therefore, moved 1500km from Cairns to Gympie to be a part of the traineeship program so that I can achieve my goal and work with primary producers to make their lives better whilst also improving environmental health.

Currently, I am involved with koala offset and fodder plantations and sustainable plantation management, which will reduce the risk of excess agricultural runoff degrading reef water quality. My aims for extension are to listen to landholders, provide them with useful resources and then ask them what they think they can do, rather than telling them what to do.



## Sharna Holman (QLD)

Sharna studied a Bachelor of Science in Agriculture graduating in 2015 with first class honours and was then selected to participate in a number of programs that promote young people in agriculture and food security.

Sharna started working for Queensland DAF in 2016, excited to find an opportunity to learn the art of extension. In my CRDC funded project, she combined delivering a regional extension officer role for Central Queensland cotton growers with taking on the role as CottonInfo technical lead for Biosecurity and Diseases. CottonInfo is the Cotton industry's joint extension program - a partnership between industry bodies CRDC, Cotton Australia and CSD - designed to connect growers with research and help them achieve best practice. As well as traditional extension processes, in this lead role, she has worked with Paul Grundy (DAF), exploring novel ways of extending an old message using YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-a0N8sm0dwU>

Most recently Sharna was selected as a Young Farming Champion representing the cotton industry through the Art4Agriculture program. This opportunity allowed her to go into schools and as a young person engage with kids and showcase the cotton industry and agriculture as "what it really is – exciting and innovating!"

Welcome to these new members who have joined since last edition. We're glad to have you all on board.

Dale Bennett	QLD
Cherry Emerick	QLD
Anna Veltman	NZ
Billie White	QLD
Ian Taylor	NSW
Susan Maas	NSW
Allan Williams	NSW
Jane Trindall	NSW
Ruth Redfern	NSW
James Quinn	NSW
Geoff Hunter	NSW
Amanda Thomas	NSW
Annabel Twine	QLD
Kieran O'Keeffe	NSW
Janelle Montgomery	NSW
Sharna Holman	QLD
Sally Ceeney	NSW
Jon Welsh	NSW
Sandra Williams	NSW
Stacey Vogel	NSW
Rene van der Sluijs	VIC
Eric Koetz	NSW
John Smith	NSW
Ali McCarthy	NSW
Rick Kowitz	QLD
Nicole Scott	QLD
Nicola Cottee	NSW
Hilary Beech	NSW
Nick Westwood	QLD
Sarah Simpson	QLD
Dianne Fullelove	QLD
Linda Walters	VIC
Luke Hargreaves	QLD
Zoe Eagger	QLD
Jacob Betros	NT
Ina Pinxterhuis	NZ
Georgia McCarthy	TAS
Rob Sluggett	QLD
Aaditi Dang	QLD
Eilis Walker	QLD
Lili Usher-Chandler	QLD
Erin Baldwin	QLD
Diana Saunders	QLD
Sara Willis	QLD
John Greer	NZ
Mary-Anne Young	SA

## WHERE TO CONTACT APEN:

### MANAGEMENT COMMITTEE

**Jeanette Long** (President)  
Ph: 08 8837 3993  
jeanette@agconsulting.com.au

**Graham Harris**  
(Vice President & Qld RC)  
Ph 0427 929 103  
graham.harris@daf.qld.gov.au

**Donna Lucas** (Treasurer & Tas RC)  
Ph 0459 047 478  
donnal@rmcg.com.au

**Chrissy Stokes**  
(Secretary & NZ/OS RC)  
Ph: 64 7 572 7735  
chrissy.stokes@zespri.com

**Pat Hamilton** (Editor)  
Ph 0409 180 164  
phamilton@rbh2.com

**Austin McLennan** (Past President)  
Ph: 0488 764 592  
austin.mclennan@nt.gov.au

### Regional Coordinators

#### NORTHERN TERRITORY

**Warren Hunt**  
Ph: 0409 809 610  
warren.hunt@nt.gov.au

#### NEW SOUTH WALES & ACT

**Anthony Kachenko**  
Ph: 0429 221 443  
Anthony.Kachenko@horticulture.com.au

#### SOUTH AUSTRALIA

**Lisa Stevens**  
Ph: 0438 720 429  
lisa.stevens@sa.gov.au

#### VICTORIA

**Mike Weise**  
Ph 0423 716 453  
jersey@jersey.com.au

#### WESTERN AUSTRALIA

**Rebecca Wallis**  
Ph: 0400 681 054  
rebeccawallis01@gmail.com

### CLUSTER COORDINATORS

#### SE Queensland & N NSW

**Ann Starasts**  
Ph 07 4631 1614  
ann.starasts@usq.edu.au

#### Western Queensland

**Gerry Roberts**  
Ph 07 4658 2523  
gerry.roberts@tpg.com.au

#### NSW, ACT, NT, SA, Melbourne, Far North Qld

#### Vacant

#### Tasmania

**Tony Butler**  
Ph 0407 912 761  
tony.butler@utas.edu.au

#### Rutherglen (Victoria)

**Carole Hollier** Ph 02 6030 4500  
carole.hollier@dpi.vic.gov.au

#### Western Australia (Agriculture)

**Pamela I'Anson** Ph 08 9690 2201  
pamela.ianson@agric.wa.gov.au

#### Perth

**Bronwyn Walsh** Ph 08 9368 3666  
bronwyn.walsh@agric.wa.gov.au

#### Policy

**Greg Leach** (Qld)  
Ph 07 3423 0873  
gleachg@optusnet.com.au

### APEN SECRETARIAT

Rosemary Currie, PO Box 1239,  
WODONGA VIC 3689, AUSTRALIA  
Ph: 02 6024 5349, Fax: 02 6056 1967, info@apen.org.au

**APEN Website** www.apen.org.au

## GFRAS/APEN International Conferences

### Hinchinbrook & Townsville

9th – 15th September 2017

APEN invites you to the 2017 GFRAS/APEN International Conferences  
held in tropical Northern Australia

The GFRAS meeting will be held in the Hinchinbrook region at the township of Ingham,  
followed by the APEN International Conference in Townsville

The conference will consist of events showcasing both International  
and Australian extension programs in operation

Keynote speakers include

Professor Dr Regina Birner, University of Hohenheim, Stuttgart, Germany

Chris Sounness, CEO, Birchip Cropping Group, Birchip, Victoria

Join us for workshops, poster exhibition and field trips

We look forward to meeting friends and widening our networks

### Guidelines and Deadlines

*Submissions should be made in MS Word 6.0 with minimal formatting. A portrait photograph of the author is required. All photographs, figures and/or tables ought to be provided as separate files (preferably TIF or JPEG; photos scanned at 300 dpi). Feature articles should be around 1000 words and minor articles 500 words. The editor reserves the right to edit submitted material to meet space restrictions. Letters to the editor or general items of news of interest to the network are welcome. Articles should be submitted at least four weeks prior to publication.*

*Preference is given to articles that are grounded in some form of project or event.*

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*Opinions expressed in ExtensionNet are not necessarily those of the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (Inc.) unless otherwise stated.*

**Stories and photos (next edition) due to Editor 6th November 2017**