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Foreword

Volume 13, Number 2 of the *Rural Extension and Innovations Systems Journal* contains mainly papers submitted to the 2017 APEN International Conference held in Townsville in conjunction with the 8th Global Forum for Rural Advisory Services annual meeting held in Ingham and Townsville. It has been published both in hard copy and online so that it was available for the conference. The journal remains essentially the same, with both Research and Practice sections.

The Research section is for publishing outcomes of research in extension. It contains papers which have been subject to a double-blind reviewing process by two independent reviewers. These papers include research into change management, extension, development and innovation systems issues for agricultural and natural resource management that follow a rigorous and recognised disciplinary research methodology and are double-blind reviewed by Editorial Board members and selected reviewers.

Practice papers are informal, accessible articles that document successes, failures and the lessons from extension professionals' experiences. They provide an opportunity for rural advisors and extension practitioners to publish stories and case studies about extension practice, which are relevant to other field operatives, but also show the application of extension theory to practice. They are assessed and edited to ensure coherency and suitability to these goals.

For the conference we received 148 abstracts, of which 52 elected to submit Research papers and 57 to submit Practice Papers. In this edition, we are publishing 28 papers, 11 Research and 17 Practice, which have met the requirements for publication before the conference.

The journal is managed by the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network by an Editor, two Assistant Editors (Sally Marsh and Lisa Cowan) and 14 Editorial Board members. For this edition additional reviewers and editors were used to assess both the Research and Practice papers. Graham Harris and Sally March managed the Practice papers while Lisa Cowan and Roy Murray-Prior managed the Research papers.

The journal remains a free access on-line journal, although it is possible to purchase hard copies from the APEN Secretariat. The web site has changed to: <http://www.apen.org.au/rural-extension-and-innovation-systems-journal>.

Roy Murray-Prior

Editor

The character of the Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal

The *Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal* is published by the Australasia-Pacific Extension Network (APEN) with free online access to APEN members and others. A printed version is available to interested individuals and organisations by paid subscription.

The *Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal* is an innovative extension publication of APEN. The journal covers extension aspects of rural systems. It is for professional extension practitioners, researchers, educators, farmers, farmer groups, corporate agribusiness managers, professional farm business consultants, extension and development officers, and postgraduate students who want to help extend the available knowledge about efficient and effective agricultural extension and development activities. Extension has many definitions but to provide guidance we will adopt that found on the Australasia Pacific Extension Network website (<http://www.apen.org.au>). There are two formats for publication:

Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Research

Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Practice

Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Research

The *Research* section of the journal will publish research into agricultural and natural resource change management, extension, development and innovation systems issues that follows a rigorous and recognised disciplinary research methodology and has been double-blind reviewed by Editorial Board members and selected reviewers. It targets professional extension practitioners, researchers and educators. The editor appraises a submission to the *Research* section, determines whether it meets the journal's criteria, and if so sends it to two reviewers for a review process. If a submission does not meet the criteria, the editor will either reject it or return it to the author with suggestions for substantial revision. A maximum of 10 pages in the journal format is desirable.

Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Practice

The aim of the *Practice* section of the journal is to provide a forum for practitioners and academics to share their experiences and practical innovations with others in the fields of agricultural extension, farm management and natural resource management. The focus therefore is on informal, accessible articles that document not only successes but also failures and the lessons from extension professionals' experiences. A maximum of six pages in the journal format is desirable. The editors will favour articles that contain the following elements:

- an innovative angle to agricultural extension and consultancy
- the use of extension and consultancy approaches in a new situation or setting, including critical reflections on lessons learned from the author's experiences
- an attempt to develop new techniques or practices, or innovative adaptations of existing ones
- an assessment of the impacts of agricultural extension approaches or programs on the farming community
- the potential and limitations for a broader role for agricultural extension in such areas as rural development and policy.

Who can access the Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal?

The *REIS Journal* is published online free of charge for APEN members and a wider audience. A subscription for printed copies of the journal can be ordered by contacting the APEN Secretariat.

Who can publish in Rural Extension and Innovation Systems Journal?

The *REIS Journal* accepts articles submitted by rural advisory and extension researchers and practitioners worldwide. However, we encourage those of you resident in Australia or New Zealand to become APEN members by contacting the APEN Secretariat at info@apen.org.au. To submit a paper for publication please send an electronic copy of your paper, edited as per Instructions to Authors available on the *REIS* web site, to the Editor at Roy@agribizrde.com.

The Editor will decide whether a paper meets the criteria for acceptance and then send it out for review under the Research or Practice guidelines. Those articles accepted after the review process will be published.