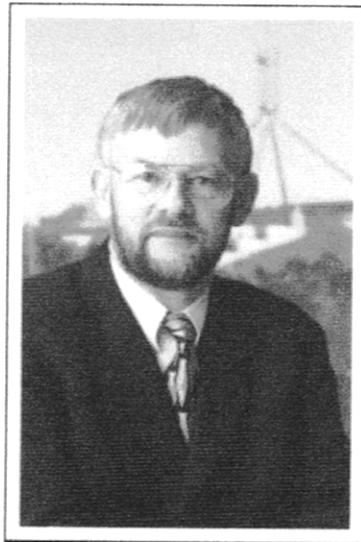


2003 AARES Distinguished Fellow

Brian S. Fisher



Executive Director, Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics (ABARE), Canberra, 1996 to present;
Executive Director, Agriculture and Forests Group, Department of Primary Industries and Energy, Canberra, February–December 1995;
Executive Director, ABARE, Canberra, 1988–1995;
Dean, Faculty of Agriculture, University of Sydney, 1987–1988;
Professor of Agricultural Economics, University of Sydney, 1985–1988;
Deputy Director, Bureau of Agricultural Economics (BAE), Canberra, 1985;
Chief Research Economist, BAE, Canberra, 1984–1985;
Head, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Sydney, 1982–1984 and 1985–1988;
Lecturer and Senior Lecturer, Department of Agricultural Economics, University of Sydney, 1976–1984;
President, Australian Agricultural Economics Society (AAES), 1989;
AAES, NSW Branch, committee member, 1976–1983 and 1986–1987, and President, 1980; Federal Council member 1981–1990; ACT Branch, Committee member, 1984–1985;

- Joint Editor (with Carolyn Tanner), *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 1984–1987;
- Member, Editorial Committee, *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 1981–1983;
- Member, Editorial Board, *Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics*, 1997–2002;
- Member, Editorial Board, *Resources Policy*, 1993–2002;
- Member, Editorial Advisory Board, *Agricultural Economics*, 1995–2000;
- Associate Editor, *The Scientific Basis of Modern Agriculture* (1988), Sydney University Press, Sydney, 1985–1986;
- Member of the Sydney University Press/Oxford University Press Joint Editorial Board, 1988;
- Editor's prize for the best article published in *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 1974;
- Editor's prize for the best article published in *Australian Journal of Agricultural Economics*, 1983 (shared with Robyn Munro);
- Awarded the Farrer Memorial Medal for 'outstanding contribution to agricultural economics in the field of research and education', 1994;
- Fellow, Academy of the Social Sciences in Australia, since 1995; and
- Awarded the Public Service Medal for 'outstanding public service in the field of agricultural and resources policy development', 2002.

Brian Fisher grew up on a dairy farm on Comboyne, in northern New South Wales, where his brothers still farm. He earned his BScAgr (Hons I), awarded in 1973, at the University of Sydney, and stayed on there to work with Keith Campbell for his PhD, awarded in 1978. While earning his PhD, Brian began work as a Lecturer in the Department of Agricultural Economics, and over a period of some 10 years at the University of Sydney he rose through the ranks eventually to become Department Head, Professor, and ultimately Dean of the Faculty. Under Brian's leadership enrolments in agricultural economics at Sydney grew significantly and the Department became stronger and rose in prominence nationally, but he only stayed as Professor for a few years before switching from academic to public service.

In parallel with his career as a University academic, Brian held a variety of positions in the Commonwealth government, beginning with a stint as Chief Research Economist and then Deputy Director at the Bureau of Agricultural Economics, the precursor to ABARE, in the mid-1980s. Brian was appointed Executive Director of ABARE in November 1988. He has held that position since then, apart from a short period at the Department of Primary Industries and Energy in 1995, and is the longest-ever serving chief executive of the Bureau. Brian has been the government board member on a number of statutory corporations, and has played a leading role in

recent years in the international climate change negotiations, in particular as economic adviser to Australia's negotiating team.

Brian's research interests have spanned the full range of topics in agricultural and resource economics, and he has published more than 200 papers and monographs. His contributions to the published literature have ranged from technical and methodological papers on econometric estimation through to a wide variety of types of applied policy analysis. A hallmark of Brian's approach to policy work is his emphasis on high-quality analysis as a basis for positions taken. In various policy settings, Brian has been a stalwart champion of economic rationality in situations where others with less courage would have taken an easier road.

Brian is a strong-minded person, who plays to win and usually does. His energy and determination have allowed him to achieve in one lifetime the equivalent of two full careers – one as an academic and one as a senior public servant. The same qualities also probably served him well in his third 'career' as a semiprofessional rally driver.

Throughout his career, Brian has been an active member of AARES, and has contributed great service to the Society as a member of various Branch Committees and the Federal Council, and in his roles of President of the Society and co-Editor of the *Journal*. Brian has received a number of research awards as well as awards in recognition of his public service contributions. He received the Farrer Memorial Medal in August 1994, became a fellow of the Academy of Social Sciences in Australia in November 1995 and was awarded the Public Service Medal in 2002.