A Handbook for

Organisation of AARES Annual Conferences

Updated on 20 February 2017

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1.   Introduction

AARES is one of the largest societies world-wide for agricultural and resource economists with branches in Australia, New Zealand and North America. Through its services, the Society provides a pre-eminent forum for innovative and scholarly work in agricultural and resource economics. The overall aims of AARES are to promote equitable, efficient and sustainable development through study, research, discussion and extension in agricultural and resource economics.

A major service provided by AARES to its members is an annual conference. This Handbook, with accompanying appendices, have been compiled to provide conference organisers with the key information needed to organise AARES conferences.

2.   Usual Conference Parameters

Time held:

Second week of February normally over four days (including any workshops).

Number of delegates:

250-350 (300 was the break-even number of registrations for Brisbane 2017 Conference)

Conference Location:

The location of AARES conferences is determined at least fifteen months in advance to allow adequate preparation for the event. Typically, AARES Federal Council at its September meeting will consider proposals from AARES branches to organise the annual conference and make a decision on location of the conference to be held 17 months later.

List of Conference tasks:

A list of Conference Tasks is attached as **Appendix 1**.

3.   Local Organising Committee Responsibilities

The LOC provides most of the voluntary work in organisation of the event, in particular, the LOC:

1.   puts a proposal to host the conference to the Federal Council
2.   puts together a Local Organising Committee
3.   selects the venue
4.   organises the audio visual requirements for the conference
5.   prepares the conference budget
6.   prepares a Promotional Flyer and initial notice for AARES website
7.   determines the key conference dates

8. organises the conference program
9. organises the paper and poster paper program sessions
10. organises the social events
11. decides the cost of conference registration
12. provides advice on possible accommodation alternatives
13. puts together the Conference Handbook
14. prepares a post-conference customer survey

The LOC will need to meet either face-to-face or via teleconference to plan and coordinate activities. LOC often meets at the AARES conference a year before the conference that they are organising, and at other convenient events.

The four Ps of marketing are a useful foci for the LOC are:

o Place – location and timing, accessible, attractive
o Product – format of the conference and workshops, key speakers
o Promotion – advertising and informing potential attendees about the event
o Price – registration fee and other associated prices (dinner, social event etc)

The Invited Speaker Program is organized by the President-Elect of AARES. Others involved in planning the conference include the President, Manager Promotions and Development and the AARES Central Office.

3.1   Conference Venue

An AARES branch wishing to organise the Annual Conference needs to submit a proposal to AARES Federal Council no later than its September meeting, 17 months before the planned conference. The proposal should outline:

a. Budget
b. Venue (including facilities available)
c. Date of conference
d. Accommodation options
e. Transport (such as availability of air travel to the location)

The proposal should note that the Branch is aware of and accepts the Guidelines for Annual Conferences as listed on the Policy File.

An example of a proposal to AARES Federal Council is included as **Appendix 2**.

The LOC recommends a conference venue to Council. The venue must provide rooms for at least seven concurrent sessions, and be able to seat 250 delegates in plenaries.

AARES Federal Council seeks to keep the cost of attending its Annual Conference towards the

lower tier of similar conference registration charges. While most of the Conference delegates are funded by employers in some form, the Federal Council wishes to maintain attendance at the Conference by a significant number of self-funded delegates including consultants, students and retired professionals. AARES expects the LOC to be vigilant in containing the costs of running the Conference. While there is now a strong preference to hold the Conference at a commercial venue (compared to a university site as previously) there is no requirement that this be a 5 star venue nor that the Conference be a 'gourmet's extravaganza'. The emphasis should be on identifying a venue which allows a good professional experience, which allows all delegates who wish the opportunity to present a contributed paper, and which is conveniently located for delegates to pursue independently other social and tourist interests.

The LOC will need to negotiate venue charges, lunch expenses and the charges for the welcome reception which are normally held at the Conference venue, and also the Conference dinner. Federal Council urges the LOC to adopt strategic behaviour with respect to choice of conference venue considering likely sponsorship opportunities, and support from state or national event/tourism organisations. This could be linked with sponsorship for workshops and symposia with associated attendance benefits.

Council agreed to collaborate with like-minded organisations in coordinating conferences, symposia and other activities.

3.2   Selecting the Committee members

Once approval has been granted by Federal Council, the AARES Branch needs to confirm membership of the LOC. The LOC typically comprises 8–10 persons who will provide much of the voluntary effort in organisation of the event.

3.3   Audio Visual Requirements

Conference AV requirements are a very important and very costly part of the conference budget – usually in the range of $20,000 - $40,000. Most conference venues either insist you use their in-house AV facilities, suggest a preferred AV provider, or allow a third party to operate within their facilities. It is very important to get a number of quotes where possible. It is also important to have a quote for the AV, daily meal costs and conference dinner before booking the venue to allow room for negotiation.

The conference venue must be able to allow Powerpoint presentations in each breakout room as well as the plenary room(s).

AARES Central Office will pay any required venue deposit on request.

3.4   Conference Budget

Conference LOCs should aim to make an operational surplus based on expected attendance.

Conferences are large and costly events. There is potential to make a reasonable surplus, but also potential to make a significant loss that will be a drain on AARES finances. The Brisbane 2017 Conference made a small loss despite having 282 registrations so, ideally, a target number of registrations to cover fixed costs of running a conference should be 300.

The LOC needs to budget carefully, and a zero base budget is worth considering instead of relying upon previous year's costings. Be alert to opportunities to trim costs and avoid 'gouging' by suppliers. Competitive tenders are essential for large items. An example of a conference budget can be found in **Appendix 3** (PDF version) (XL Spreadsheet version)**.**

Wherever possible costs should be kept as low as possible and the price of large ticket items (accommodation bat hotels, venues, etc.) should be negotiated to seek a discount.

3.5   Conference Flyer

The LOC should prepare a conference flyer prior to the preceding conference giving dates, venue, theme and link to a promotional video which will also be presented at the end of that preceding conference. An example of the flyer for the Canberra 2016 conference can be found in **Appendix 4**.

3.6   Key Conference Dates

The LOC must set key dates for the forthcoming conference. The following timetable was used for the 2016 conference:

•	Date	Action
•	Early June	Call for Submissions for Pre-conference Workshops (WS) and Mini-Symposia (MS) proposals
•	Early July	Call for Selected Papers, Contributed Papers and Posters
•	End August	Final date for the submission of WS and MS Proposals
•	16 September	Final date for the submission of Selected Papers (in full)
•	25 September	Conveners of WS and MS to be advised if their submission is successful
•	Early October	Online Registrations Open
•	16 October	Final date for the submission of Contributed Papers
•	16 October	Deadline for submissions for the Donna Brennan Award
•	14 November	Authors to be advised of the success of their paper submission
•	19 December	All Presenting Authors to be registered for the Conference or their paper to be removed from the program
•	31 December	Closing date for early bird rates

It is important to advise paper authors of the success of their submission as early as possible to enable them to pay for their conference registration well before the holiday season when finance offices are closed.

3.7 Typical Conference Program:

Monday:	Outgoing Council Meeting
Tuesday:	Pre-conference workshops (budget on 30-40 people per workshop)
Tuesday evening:	Welcome Reception
Tuesday evening:	Early Career Social event
Wednesday morning:	Early Career Researchers and Mentors Breakfast (to be trialled in Brisbane 2017)
Wednesday:	Conference: (Opening Plenary and Presidential Address) and Three Minute Thesis (to be trialled in Brisbane 2017)
Wednesday evening:	Conference dinner
Thursday:	Job Market Forum (to be trialled in Brisbane 2017)
Thursday:	Conference: (Distinguished Fellows Lecture)
Thursday:	AGM
Thursday evening:	Informal social event
Friday:	Conference: (Invited Speakers)
Friday:	Incoming Council Meeting

An Annual Conference program outline is given in **Appendix 5** (PDF version) (Word version)**.**

It is preferred that the Conference should both begin and end with plenary sessions, so as to allow the Conference opening and closure to occur smoothly.

Pre-conference workshops

The LOC should consider holding three pre-conference workshops on the Tuesday immediately prior to the main conference with the aim of carrying over as many people as possible into the conference program.

The LOC invites members to organise one or more pre-conference workshops, generally with a view to encouraging attendance at the main conference. Often these workshops provide opportunities for like-minded groups to meet.

An example of the call to submit Pre-conference Workshop Proposals can be found in **Appendix 6**.

An example of a final Pre-conference Workshop Program for uploading onto the conference website can be found in **Appendix 7**.

Early Career Researcher Workshop
In 2016 an Early Career Researcher Workshop was held preceding the conference. AARES strongly supports these events and LOC should be alert to proposals to hold ECRW preceding future AARES conferences.

AARES Council Meetings and Annual General Meeting

The LOC, in consultation with the Federal Secretary, should organise the time and venue for the three Council Meetings traditionally held during the AARES Conference.

- The *Outgoing Federal Council Meeting* is usually held on either the Monday or the Tuesday prior to the commencement of the Conference (depending on whether or not pre-conference workshops are included in the program). Six hours should be allowed for the meeting and a room for up to at least 20 people with facilities to allow Council members to call in if they are unable to attend in person.

- The *Annual General Meeting* takes place on Thursday afternoon immediately after the Keith Campbell (or alternative name for Distinguished Fellow) Lecture. The program should allow up to 2 hours for this meeting.

- The *Incoming Federal Council Meeting* is usually held on Friday afternoon immediately after the official closing of the conference. The meeting usually takes around an hour and a half and a room for up to 20 people with facilities to allow Council members to call in if they are unable to attend in person.

3.8   Paper and Poster Program

Organising the contributed paper sessions is a large job for two or three members of the LOC. Council agreed to form a conference papers committee, separate from the LOC, on which members can serve for 2-3 years, to manage the conference papers, including allocation of papers into streams [Council 8/02/13], but this was not implemented in 2016.

Online Submission Software

Some years ago a paper submission software program, Abstract Manager, was purchased by AARES and linked to the AARES database, however this proved to be difficult and cumbersome to use. In 2015, the NZ LOC used a program called [Conference Maker](#), and in 2016, the LOC purchased a licence to use for one event an online program called [EasyChair](#). Such software provides a focal point for the receipt of titles, abstracts and contributed papers, and provides updated spreadsheets of the information submitted.

Contributed Papers

Attendance at the conference is often dependent on acceptance of a contributed paper. The LOC needs to ensure that as many members as possible have the opportunity to have a contributed paper on the program while also ensuring an adequate time per presentation.

Typically, many more titles are initially offered than it is feasible to provide time slots for their delivery but many drop out subsequently. The deadlines specified for the submission of abstracts and for the delivery of papers have been poorly observed in the past. Many of the withdrawals are made late in the day and this adds considerably to the difficulty of choosing appropriate facilities to provide their presentation, and to schedule the remaining papers into coherent themes. Also, for a number of reasons, there are last minute withdrawals and 'no

shows', of both presenters and chairs, on the day to contend with. In addition, some members have preferences/restrictions as to when they can present their paper.

For the 2016 Conference, a total of 243 paper titles were initially offered but only 172 papers were eventually presented at the conference — an attrition rate of some 30 per cent. Rules that have been used to select papers and speakers for inclusion at the conference are:

- Any member may make only one presentation (but can co-author other papers, and present at a pre-conference event);
- All members were guaranteed a slot to present.

Duration of Contributed/Selected Paper Presentations

From previous experience, the recommended program timing for each paper presentation is 23 minutes, including questions (up to 5 minutes) and change-over time. This allowed four papers in a 90 minute session. In 2016 this was reduced to 15 minutes to accommodate a greater number of presenters.

Allow at least 5 mins between the final contributed paper session and the distinguished fellows address.

Submission of Papers and Posters

The Call for Submissions for Papers and Posters (**Appendix 8**) should be issued at the beginning of July. Authors of contributed papers and posters will be required to submit a title and an abstract through the online submission system by the closing date; and authors of selected papers will need to submit a copy of their full paper by the closing date. A Contributed Paper Template can be found in **Appendix 9** (PDF version) (Word version).

Selected papers

Federal Council has agreed to consider the option that authors submit Conference papers which would be refereed and presented as Selected Papers. This would benefit those authors who may need to justify their attendance at the conference by presenting a peer-reviewed paper to satisfy their conditions of employment.

The call for selected papers is distributed with the call for contributed papers and posters (**Appendix 8**); however, authors are required to submit a full paper with their abstract by the closing date for submissions. This is to allow the LOC sub-committee sufficient time to review the paper. An example of a Selected Paper submission template is given in **Appendix 10** (PDF version) (Word version).

Papers which are determined not to be of sufficient quality for a selected paper can be submitted as a contributed paper or a poster. Organisers can generally expect between 15-20 submissions for selected papers.

Posters

Over the last few years, poster sessions have been very successful. They present a great training exercise for PhD's and early career researchers, and an excellent way to improve on their interactive and communication skills. A poster template is given in **Appendix 11**.

Session Themes

Sorting contributed papers into a program with coherent themes is a large task. In developing themes there is a trade-off between grouping them by a few broad generic themes or by many specific topics that are preferred, but this is easily disrupted by late withdrawals. The attached spreadsheet can help with the scheduling task (Appendix 12)**.** Experience indicates that broader-based themes may be preferable as last-minute reallocation of papers across sessions due to cancellations may lead to a poor match between papers and sessions. While it is tempting to replace withdrawn papers from the waiting list, this may lead to a sub-optimal final allocation. Organisers should expect some long hours at the last minute as contributors finally decide on the papers they will actually present.

Session Chairs
The LOC has the responsibility of organising chairpersons for each session (drawn from the list of delegates).

Guidelines for Chairs of Contributed Paper sessions is given in **Appendix 13**.

3.9   Social Events

The LOC is responsible for arranging a series of social events throughout the conference. In 2016, these events included those in **Attachment 14**.

Welcome Reception

A two-hour Welcome Reception for all delegates is normally held at the conference venue on the Tuesday afternoon preceding the conference and includes drinks and light nibbles. The Welcome Reception is included in cost of a full registration. Other delegates, such as Day Registrants, must pay to attend this function.

Social Event for Early Career Members

After the Welcome Drinks on the Tuesday evening, a social event directed towards Early Career members is usually organised to encourage people who are early in their careers to meet new people and make contacts. This is usually a casual event and is often sponsored in part or in full by the Branch organising the conference.

Early Career Researchers and Mentors Breakfast

This will be trialled in Brisbane 2017 and is intended to link early career researchers (ECRs) to more senior AARES members for their mutual benefit on the first day of the Conference. Ahead of the breakfast consideration must be given to allocating ECR to suitable mentors. Mentoring

responsibilities at the conference would include the mentor attending the presentation(s) of the ECR and offer feedback on the presentation (delivery and content).

Conference Dinner

The Conference Dinner takes place on the Wednesday evening of the conference. All prizes, awards and fellowships are announced at the Conference Dinner and recorded in the Minutes of the AGM immediately following. An agenda for the Dinner, based on the one used successfully at the recent Annual Conferences is given in **Appendix 15**.

The Federal Secretary will produce a handbook for the Dinner (**Appendix 16**).

Distinguished Fellows to be honoured at the Annual Conference will be provided with Conference registration and dinner free of charge.

If possible, the LOC should arrange for the receipt of awards to be photographed.

AARES has a Code of Conduct and organisers of the conference dinner should alert dinner speakers of it before the event (**Appendix 17**).

Networking Event

On the Tuesday evening, a casual social event is usually organised off-site. The LOC can normally expect up to 80 people to attend this event. The format is flexible.

3.10 Conference registration price

The following example of conference registration fees from the 2017 conference is typically followed:

	Earlybird	Full Rate	Day Rate
Ordinary Member (paid up until 31/12/2017)	$650	$750	$300
Ordinary Member (including 2017 membership)	$770	$870	$420
New Ordinary Member (including 2017 membership)	$770	$870	$420
Student Member (paid up until 31/12/2015)	$325	$375	$150
Student Member (including 2015 membership)	$375	$425	$200
New Student Member (including 2015 membership)	$375	$425	$200
Emeritus Member (paid up until 31/12/2015)	$325	$375	$150
Emeritus Member (including 2015 membership)	$375	$425	$200

Registrations received prior to midnight on 31 December receive an early bird discount of $100

for Ordinary members and $50 for Student and Emeritus members.

Members who have not yet paid their membership for the year in which the conference will be held, as well as non-members, will pay the basic registration rate plus an amount equivalent to one year's membership to the Society.

The fee charged to non-members who register should be greater than the fee for members by an amount equal to the cost of membership, and non-members should automatically become members [Council 11/9/98].

The following table, which specifies the basic registration rates for fully paid up members, may assist in determining the registration rates for future conferences.

	2012 Fremantle	2013 Sydney	2014 Port Macqu.	2015 Rotorua	2016 Canberra	2017 Brisbane
Early Bird Rates (prior to 31 Dec)						
Full Conference Rates						
Ordinary	650	650	650	600	650	650
Student/Emeritus	325	325	325	300	325	325
Day Conference Rates						
Ordinary	275	275	300	250	300	300
Student/Emeritus	140	140	150	125	150	150
Workshops – full day						
Ordinary	150	150	No w/s	50	150	150
Student/Emeritus	150	75	No w/s	50	75	75
Welcome Drinks	55	55	35	40	55	55
Early Career Event (Tue night)	25	25	25	30	0	25
Dinner (Wed night)	105	105	90	80	125	125
Networking Event (Thur night)	50	50	70	60	75	75

An example of a Registration Form can be found in **Appendix 18**.

3.11 Accommodation alternatives

The LOC should provide delegates (via the conference website) with a number of alternative accommodation options and, if possible, arrange a special rate with these hotels for conference delegates. It is a good idea to provide information on a 4 star, a 3 star and possible budget options. Some hotels will offer a 10% commission and/or one or two complimentary rooms for every 20 rooms booked which can be used to reduce Invited Speaker costs.

3.12 Conference Handbook

Assemble Conference Handbook or ensure papers are accessible via smart phones or other devices and Conference satchel. An example of a Conference Handbook can be found in **Attachment 19**.

3.13   Conference Awards

The following prizes are awarded at each conference. The LOC should nominate judges from within its ranks. The awards are announced at the closing of the conference on Friday afternoon.

First-Time Presenter's Award

A prize of $100 is awarded to the best first-time presenter at each annual conference. The criterion for eligibility is that the presenter should be making their first presentation at an AARES Conference and that their first presentation at any   national or international conference was no longer ago than 12 months. More details about the award can be found in **Appendix 20**, and an Evaluation Form can be found in **Appendix 21**.

The LOC is to provide all contributed paper session chairs with assessment forms to be completed for first-time presenters in their sessions. The award is to be judged before the closing of the conference by the LOC and the winner announced in the closing session.

Best Poster Award

A prize of $100 is awarded to the best poster at each annual conference as judged by the LOC. A Best Poster Evaluation Form can be found in **Appendix 22**.

Best Poster Presentation Award

A prize of $100 is awarded to the best poster presentation at each annual conference as judged by the LOC. An Evaluation Form can be found in **Appendix 23**.

Three Minute Thesis Awards (to be trialled at Brisbane 2017)

A book voucher for the first, second and third best 'Three Minute Thesis' at the Conference. Three judges from sponsoring organisations (ideally also attending the Job market Forum) are to be invited to be the judges.

Donna Brennan Prize
The Donna Brennan Prize has been awarded annually from 2014 and is a cash award of $1,500 to cover conference registration (including dinner), accommodation, and make a contribution towards the cost of attending the conference.

3.14   Childcare options

The LOC should make available for parents with young children who might be attending the conference the contact details of at least two insured and registered childcare providers. Ideally, this should include one facility located near the conference venue and also an individual or company that can provide these services directly.

4.   Responsibilities of the President Elect

The President Elect is responsible for organising the program of invited speakers at the Annual Conference. Collaboration with the Chair of the LOC over this is highly desirable. Where possible and relevant the President Elect should liaise with potential sponsors of particular sessions before the program is finalised.

Invited speakers are key features in a conference program and they need to be identified and invited a year or more in advance to ensure that they are able to commit to the event. Clearly identify to them dates for the event and what you are offering on, airfares, accommodation and other expenses.

The President Elect should formally request that invited speakers submit their invited paper or another paper of their choice for review and possible publication by the Australian Journal of Agricultural and Resource Economics [DP 3/10/01, adapted from an earlier Council resolution that this should be a condition of the invitation].

As per a resolution by Outgoing Council on Tuesday 7 February 2017, there is up to $20,000 maximum available to cover both travel and accommodation of all invited and plenary speakers. The invitation to each speaker must underline specify a fixed amount that can be paid as a contribution to costs or as honorarium (or both) so the costs incurred by are not open ended. (See **Appendix 24** for an example of letter of invitation to invited speakers).

Budget for Invited Speaker Costs

The Invited Speaker budget is determined by Council from time to time. At the 2015 Incoming Council Meeting, this item was increased to $15,000. This is the amount available to the President Elect to cover the airfares, accommodation and registration costs for all the Invited Speakers.

There is no standard rate of financial assistance to invited speakers at the AARES Conference. The level of assistance is the subject of negotiation between the President Elect and the speaker, prior to the invitation being finalised. As a guideline, speakers should at, minimum, be offered complimentary registration at the Conference (including the Conference Dinner) and reasonable accommodation expenses for the three days (or for four days for international speakers) of the conference. Typically, travel assistance to the extent of a return economy airfare is negotiable to invited speakers (for both domestic and international speakers). The costs of invited speakers are to be met from within the conference budget [DP 3/10/01].

Complimentary Membership to AARES

Invited speakers to the main conference who are non-members should be granted complimentary membership of the Society for the calendar year in which they attended the conference.

The Distinguished Fellows [Council 18/09/02] Lecture is to be used to bring a high profile speaker to the Annual Conference to present an address named in honour of one of the Society's Distinguished Fellows. The recipient of the award will be known as the — Distinguished Fellows Lecturer (in 2014, 2015 and 2016 it was named after Keith Campbell). A brief bio of the named Distinguished Fellow should be given at the start of the address by the chair of the session.

5.   Sponsorship and the Responsibilities of the MPD

The Manager Promotion and Development (MPD) has an important role in attracting and maintaining sponsorship of the Annual Conference. This role was assigned to the MPD as a means of ensuring longer term relationships with our main sponsors. It is anticipated that the MPD will establish personal relationships with sponsors and seek and be sensitive to suggestions from sponsors about how they can benefit from sponsoring our conference.
Others who need to liaise with the MPD and can assist the MPD in securing sponsorship are the President Elect and the Chair of the LOC. The LOC can play an important role in attracting local sponsorship that may not be available for other conferences.

List of Past Sponsors

A co-ordinated approach to sponsorship is essential to ensure that potential sponsors are approached in a professional way, and appropriate recognition of sponsors is provided before and during the conference.

A key action in seeking sponsorship is to obtain the list of sponsors of the preceding AARES conference and (if relevant and appropriate) invite those organisations to again sponsor the forthcoming conference. The previous LOC, Manager Promotions and Development, President, AOM should all be able to provide information/contacts for previous year sponsors.

Long-standing sponsors include: ABARE, ACIAR, ABS, DAF, DPI (NSW), DPI (Victoria), GRDC, LWA, MDBC, PC and RIRDC. These sponsors should be approached each year.

List of Sponsorship Opportunities

Recent sponsorship options are detailed in an **Appendix 25**. Options include:
- sponsoring a plenary or invited paper session which may include providing a chair for the session and/or identifying a speaker and hosting that speaker at their institution pre- or post- conference;
- sponsoring a contributed paper session which may include chairing the session and/or identifying themes and particular papers for the session. Such papers may include reports on projects the sponsor has funded and is seeking to have peer reviewed;
- some sponsors provide funds, but do not wished to be identified with any particular

sessions;

- depending on the level of funding, sponsors often take advantage of opportunities for trade displays; and

- opportunity to participate at the conference Job market Forum (to be trialled in Brisbane 2017).

The earlier sponsors are approached, the greater the opportunities for them to have an influence on the program enhancing the likelihood of sponsorship.

Letters to Sponsors

An example of a letter to sponsors outlining sponsorship opportunities is included in **Appendix 26**.

An example of a letter confirming sponsorship is given in **Appendix 27**.

Trade Displays

The LOC with the MPD must decide whether or not to make trade display facilities available to sponsors. Usually around 7 are required and will include a table with a poster board behind plus power and internet. The decision of whether or not to include trade displays may depend on the cost involved to hire the display equipment and the policy of the venue.

The MPD should determine the needs of each trade sponsors.

Media Planning

Conferences provide opportunities for publicising the work of AARES and a media plan is helpful to maximise these opportunities. The LOC is advised to enlist the support and advice of communication specialists where possible (e.g. within their own organisation). With this support, a plan can be developed to distribute information about the AARES conference to selected people in mass media and to ensure the event and speakers at the event are publicised.

For a number of years, AARES has enlisted the support of Cathy Reade from the Crawford Fund to manage the Society's conference media liaison and communications. An example of a media report highlighting Cathy's efforts on behalf of AARES can be found in **Appendix 28**. In return, AARES will cover the cost of Cathy's airfares, accommodation and registration. A copy of a previous letter of agreement can be found in **Appendix 29**.

Conference Bag Inserts

The MPD should ensure that high quality logos are received electronically from the major sponsors to be printed on the exterior of the conference bags.

The MPD should also communicate with the relevant sponsors with regard to the receipt (and dispatch) of sponsorship documentation to be included in the conference bags.

Post Conference Report

After each Conference, the sponsors of that Conference should be sent a Report on the Conference, a letter of thanks and an invitation to sponsor the following conference (**Appendix 30**).

6. Responsibilities of the AARES Central Office Manager (COM)

Conference Website

The COM will design a conference website with the assistance and input from the LOC which provides information about the Conference, the program, invited speakers, accommodation options, instructions for the submission of paper titles, abstracts and final papers, guides for presenters, etc.

Registration

The COM, with input from the LOC, will design and implement the online registration system with links from the conference website.

The COM will accept delegate registrations and payments by various financial instruments including credit cards, on-line and on-site. Any complimentary registrations must be processed manually by the COM and receipts sent to the relevant delegate.

Once the online registration process is open, the COM will provide regular reports to the LOC about numbers for the various functions.

Assist with the registration of Invited Speakers, Sponsor delegates and other delegates receiving complimentary (in full or in part) registrations (e.g. prize winners).

Financial Matters

The COM will pay all invoices for services on behalf of the LOC on receipt of an invoice. This includes venue deposits.

At the request of the LOC and the MPD, the COM will produce invoices for sponsorship.
The COM will maintain an on-going budget to assist the LOC.

The COM will send the LOC copies of past documentation and pro forma.

The COM will prepare a final conference report for the LOC and AARES Council.

Pre-conference Administration Matters

The COM will organise the printing of delegate name tags based on conference registrations through the database.

The COM will print tickets for each social event.

On-site Support

The COM will attend the full conference and provide onsite support throughout the event, preferably with the assistance of 2-3 student volunteers proposed by the LOC.

The COM will organise the packing of the conference bags at the conference site immediately prior to the commencement of the conference.

Conference proceedings

Immediately following the conference, the COM sends out an email asking all presenting authors who wish to have a copy of their paper and/or presentation uploaded onto the AgEcon Search website to send a copy of these documents to the Central Office. Papers and presentations which are already in the AARES online submission system will only be included with the permission of the author(s).

Conference Survey

Each year following the conference, delegates should be sent a link to the AARES Survey Monkey account to respond to questions about the recent conference. Prior to sending out the link, the LOC should confirm that the series of questions from the previous year are appropriate and make any changes as required. The AARES Central Office can provide the LOC with the appropriate log in and password. An example of the survey questions can be found in **Appendix 31**.

7.   Other Considerations

Benefits to LOC Members
There should be no formal payment arrangement for members of LOCs and the Chair of the h LOC is expected to use good judgement in looking after LOC members' interests. For example, the Chair of the LOC may choose to grant complimentary registration at the conference for hardworking LOC members whose employers will not pay for them to attend the conference. Attendance at the conference dinner may also be used to reward particular LOC members who would otherwise have to pay for themselves to attend.

Benefits to the AARES Branch that organises the conference
If the conference achieves an operational surplus, the dollars are shared between the LOC Branch and AARES following the formula included in the Policy File. A surplus up to $20,000 is

shared equally between the LOC and AARES, and above $20,000 the surplus goes to AARES.

Conference Insurance

If conference insurance is required, the AARES Treasurer will organise this at the request of the LOC depending on the requirements of the conference venue.