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FROM THE EDITOR

By Andy Cowan

The current format of the Australian Deer Farming magazine will cease to be as of this issue. When I first became involved with the magazine, a certain amount of money was allocated from DIAA membership fees. This, together with advertising income, ensured the production of each issue. In those days, the Deer Association had over 400 members and there were over 20 advertisers in each issue.

In recent times, RIRDC has been funding the magazine. This has now ceased. Its involvement meant that all deer farmers had access to industry information and research findings. I am grateful that RIRDC made the printing of the ADF possible over the past few years but, for whatever reason, the interpretation of long standing principles and frameworks has now changed, with only research being funded. As we are such a small player in the National Research, Development and Extension Framework (a \$1b budget), we could simply be part of the overall commitment of RIRDC to reduce costs. My only comment would be that it is our money that RIRDC have in their account.

One of the huge benefits of a project such as this magazine was that it further developed our industry. For many deer farmers, the magazine provided them with access to research, increased their awareness of industry issues and gave them the opportunity to have a voice. The magazine is an incredible historical record of what has happened since the 1980s - personalities, politics, research, deer management, conferences and general farming insights. I still shudder when I inhale some dust in the deer shed after reading Rob Mulley's research in 2003/4. The magazine is a reference resource that I still access regularly.

Future distribution of information to deer farmers will now be via email (sorry Milton). For those who do not have reliable internet access a hard copy, printed by your State Branch, will be forwarded to you. Please make sure that Marika has your current email address.

My thanks to Max Hyde of Town and Country Farmer for allowing us to reproduce the article on Dianne and Ross Lawrence.

Also thanks to Marika McKinnon for organising the AGM and Dawn Evans for showing us the versatility of antler products which were on display at the AGM.