

AGENDA

72nd Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 26th October 2016
Dubbo RSL Club Resort
“Local Government – the Voice of the Basin”

1. WELCOME

- 1.1 Opening Address from the Chair: National President, Cr David Thurley
- 1.2 Minister’s Welcome: The Hon Niall Blair, NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Lands and Water

2. ATTENDANCE

- 1.1 Present
- 1.2 Apologies
- 1.3 Declaration of Interests

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1 Meeting held 10 September 2015, Barooga

4. REPORTS

- 4.1 2016 Annual Report
- 4.2 2016 Financial Report
- 4.3 Appointment of Auditor for 2016/17

5. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

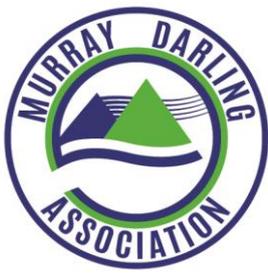
- 5.1 Special Motion - Constitution (2016)
- 5.2 Strategic Plan 2016-2019
- 5.3 Basin Plan Implementation impacts evaluation framework
- 5.4 MDBA Regional Engagement Officers
- 5.5 Regional Issues Map
- 5.6 Review of Regional Boundaries
- 5.7 Recommendations of the Senate Select Committee into the Murray-Darling Basin
- 5.8 Darling River System
- 5.9 Lake Albert to Coorong Connector

- 5.10 Management of the Lower Lakes
- 5.11 Long Nosed Fur Seals
- 5.12 Desalination and Clarence River diversions
- 5.13 Climate Change
- 5.14 Blue Green Algae
- 5.15 Motion for meeting critical human water needs
- 5.16 Collaborative research initiative for Securing Adequate Safe Domestic Water for Rural and Remote Regions
- 5.17 Single Point of Contact River Murray Authority, SA
- 5.18 Tourism
- 5.19 Standard river height measurements

6. NEXT MEETING

- 6.1 Announcement of the 2018 AGM Location

7. CLOSE



MEETING PAPERS

**72nd Annual General Meeting
& National Conference
Wednesday 26th October 2016
Dubbo RSL Club Resort
“Local Government – the Voice of the Basin”**

1. WELCOME

- 1.1 Opening Address from the Chair
- 1.2 Minister’s Welcome - NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Lands and Water, The Hon Niall Blair
Represented by Dr Christobel Ferguson, Department of Primary Industries – Water

2. ATTENDANCE

- 1.1 Present
- 1.2 Apologies

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

- 3.1 Meeting held 2015, Thursday 10 September 2015 Cobram Barooga Golf Club, Barooga
Attachment 3.1
[Meeting Minutes](#)

4. REPORTS

- 4.1 Presentation of the 2016 Annual Report
Attachment 4.1
[2016 Annual Report](#)
- 4.2 Presentation of the 2016 Annual Financial Report
Attachment 4.1
[2016 Financial Report](#)
[Independent Auditors Report](#)
- 4.3 Appointment of Auditor for 2016/17
Motion: That MGR Accountants be appointed auditor for the 2016/17 financial year.

5. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

5.1 Special Motion 1 - Constitution (2016)

Background

In 2014 the Board resolved to review the Constitution (2006) for compliance with current legislation under which the Association is incorporated, *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* (NSW).

The further stated objectives of the review were to

- a) resolve all ambiguity as to membership rights and voting entitlements,
- b) establish a voting structure that provided equity for members, and re-established the primacy of the entitlement of local government, and
- c) to retain wherever possible the founding intent articulated in the current constitution.

Andrew Sherman, an awarded expert in Local Government Law and Water Law of Russell Kennedy Lawyers was approached to provide legal advice, and agreed to work with the MDA executive to assist with the review, drawing on both his expertise and the many years of association with the MDA. Since then an extensive program of engagement and review has been undertaken with the membership through the region meetings, and a further session at the strategic planning workshop in Echuca in February provided board members as regional reps to further contribute to the process.

The result is a comprehensive and compliant constitution, fit for purpose, and able to take our organization into the future with clarity and confidence.

The Constitution 2016 was noted by the Board at extra-ordinary meeting 361 and commended to the membership for adoption at the 2016 National Conference and AGM.

The current constitution, at section 18 requires that a motion to amend the constitution must be carried by special resolution, that is a vote of 75% of those present and eligible to vote.

[Attachment 5.1.1
MDA Constitution \(2016\)](#)
[Attachment 5.1.2
MDA Constitution \(2006\)](#)

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association

- a) **recognise, value and note the retention where possible the intent and founding principles contained within the current edition of this organisation's Constitution 2006**
- b) **note that a range of drafting errors and omissions within the current document render it non-compliant with the legislation under which the MDA is governed, and**
- c) **adopt as its Constitution the document titled Constitution 2016, to take effect 01/11/2016.**

Moved: Cr D Thurley (President, MDA Board)

5.2 Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Background

The Murray Darling Association Strategic Plan 2016-19 aims to provide a clear, cohesive and concise statement of the actions that will enable the MDA to fulfil our purpose and to represent our members on issues of local and basin wide significance.

This Plan is a collection of the transformative actions that will provide a platform for genuine local government and community participation in the decisions that impact our communities on Basin-related issues.

With the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan, there has never been a more important time to ensure that local government and communities work together with all levels of government to ensure balanced outcomes in the management of our resources.

This Plan has been endorsed by members and representatives of the 12 regions across the Basin.

This Plan has benefited from the collective experience of hundreds of members, the contribution of stakeholders from across the policy spectrum, and from supporters and from critics representing a wide range of interests.

In its 72 years, there has never before been a published Plan for the MDA that recognises the importance of the issues unique to the distinct regions of the Basin and articulates a shared vision and a plan to achieve that vision.

Attachment 5.2
[Strategic Plan 2016-19](#)

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association

- a) notes the Strategic Plan 2016-19 as approved by the Board
- b) commits to work towards the effective implementation of the strategy.

Moved: Cr B Featherston

5.3 Basin Plan Implementation impacts evaluation framework

Background

The MDA has committed to develop a rigorous and repeatable Basin Plan impacts evaluation framework and methodology against which the social and economic impacts of the plan can be measured and assessed. We recognise that Basin communities must be able to identify and distinguish short term, unrelated, and one-off impacts from the underlying performance of the Plan, and we have partnered with the Western Research Institute to engage the technical expertise required to develop a sound methodology.

Attachment 5.3
[Basin Plan Implementation Impacts Evaluation Framework – project proposal](#)

Motion:

That the Murray Darling Association

- a) notes the Basin Plan Implementation impacts evaluation framework project proposal, to be undertaken in collaboration with our research partner Western Research Institute, and
- b) calls on the state and federal governments to support the funding for the project as proposed.

Moved: Des Bilske

5.4 MDBA Regional Engagement Officers

Background

Following calls from a number of high profile candidates to the last federal election for the MDBA to be relocated from Canberra to a regional centre, the MDBA has implemented a pilot program to place a number of Regional Engagement Officers across the Basin, in a range of host employment arrangements. The MDA acknowledges the importance of the MDBA improving community awareness and understanding of the Basin Plan through two-way communication and customised engagement that is responsive to different regional issues and priorities.

Members and stakeholders have expressed some concerns that the process for the hosting and support of Regional Engagement Officers under the current arrangement may be unintentionally inequitable and potentially divisive. Concerns raised include

- There appears to be the potential for conflict of interest between the MDBA and the hosting employer for the individuals appointed.
- Invited councils feel conflicted between their obligation to act in the best interest of their immediate community, and the interest of Basin communities as a collective.
- Were all Basin councils invited to tender?
- Absence of consultation or criteria for identifying the target regions, and identifying appropriate hosts

The MDA has offered to work with the MDBA in the development of a process that would see equitable and meaningful representation of local government and the communities we represent through closer regional engagement.

Motion:

That the Murray Darling Association

- a) **supports the MDBA to enhance its regional engagement efforts, and**
- b) **offers to work closely with the MDBA, consistent with the principles and objectives of the Memorandum of Understanding that exists between our organisations, to ensure that the structure and arrangements of any regional engagement strategy undertaken by the MDBA is able to deliver strong, equitable and meaningful regional engagement.**

Moved: Mayor Paul Maytom (R9)

5.5 Regional Issues Map

Background

As an Association we share the vision of a healthy Murray Darling Basin. Through the prism of local government, we all aspire to support the opportunity for economic growth and development, health, happy, vibrant people, and a sustainable natural and built environment.

How we achieve that aspiration will vary from council to council, region to region, state to state. We recognise that our regions represent the interests, issues and circumstances of a wide array of communities across a vast tract of the Australian continent.

The councils of the MDA work together to better understand the unique issues that define, challenge and shape our regions. In the year ahead, our regions will continue this work to develop regional strategic plans and advocacy priorities that will help inform policy and achieve shared solutions.

Motion:

That the Murray Darling Association

- a) notes an undertaking by the 12 regions of the Basin to develop Regional Strategies reports to address local issues as noted at item 2.6 of the Murray Darling Association Strategic Plan 2016-19,
- b) will, through its region meetings support the contribution of informed content to identify and define regional issues, and
- c) seeks funding to resource the development of these reports into Regional Strategic Plans.

Moved: Cr B Featherston (Board)

5.6 Review of Regional Boundaries

Background

The MDA has 12 Regions across the Basin, covering 4 states & ACT. State borders are not defining boundaries, with our regions associated by councils reflecting common regional interests and shared ecologies. In order to ensure the strength of our regions, it is important that our member councils identify a strong alignment of interests within each region.

To ensure that our regional boundaries do reflect and achieve that objective, a review should be undertaken with the active engagement of our members and stakeholders.

The MDA is currently working with the Dept of Environment cartography team to provide up to date mapping.

Attachment 5.6

Motion:

[Regional Boundaries Map by council \(2014\)](#)

That the Murray Darling Association

- a) undertake a body of work, in 2017/18 to review the regional boundaries in collaboration with all member councils to ensure a continuation of alignment as communities of interest.
- b) notes that the Murray Darling Association does not recognise state borders as defining regional boundaries.

Moved: Cr David Thurley (R1)

5.7 Recommendations of the Senate Select Committee into the Murray-Darling Basin

Background

On 24 June 2015, the Senate resolved to establish the Select Committee on the Murray-Darling Basin Plan to inquire into and report, on or before 26 February 2016, on the positive and negative impacts of the Murray-Darling Basin Plan ("the Plan") and associated Commonwealth programs on regional communities. Chaired by Senator David Leyonhjelm, the committee received 399 submissions, and held nine public hearings – in Canberra, ACT; St George, Qld; Broken Hill, NSW; Griffith, NSW; Echuca, Vic; Shepparton, Vic; Goolwa, SA; Renmark, SA; and again in Canberra.

The Chair tabled the report "Refreshing the Plan" in the parliament on 17th March 2016. That report concluded with 32 Recommendations. It is worth noting that there were a number of dissenting reports to the Chair's report from other members of the committee.

Those recommendations, along with a selection of dissenting reports are attached.

A full copy of the Report can be found at online. [Click here](#) to access.

Attachment 5.7.1

[Refreshing the Plan - Recommendations](#)

Attachment 5.7.2

[Dissenting Report – Senator Nick Xenophon](#)

Attachment 5.7.3

[Dissenting Report – Senator John Madigan](#)

Motion:

That the Murray Darling Association

- a) supports the implementation of the recommendations of the Senate Select Committee into the Murray Darling Basin Plan, published in the report "Refreshing the Plan", tabled in parliament in March 2016, and
- b) calls on the government to make public the details of all and any action taken, or proposed to be taken towards the implementation of the recommendations.

Motion: Mr Ken Pattison (R3)

5.8 Darling River System

Background

No background provided. Motion deemed self-explanatory.

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association supports the campaign, initiated by the member councils of Region 4, including Broken Hill City Council, Mildura Rural City Council, Wentworth Shire Council and Central Darling Shire Council to ensure a sustainable Darling River system that ensures the health and wellbeing of the communities that live along it and enriches the Economic, Social, Environmental and Cultural values that has been part of its long history.

Moved: Mr Gerard José (R4)

5.9 Lake Albert to Coorong Connector

Background

No background provided.

For further information, go to <http://www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au/samurraydarlingbasin/projects/all-projects-map/lake-albert-scoping-study> .

Attachment 5.9
[Lake Albert Scoping Study Fact Sheet](#)

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association actively support the creation of a connector between Lake Albert and the Coorong to generate a saving in environmental water and improve the water quality in the Lower Lakes and Coorong.

Moved: (Coorong District Council, R6)

5.10 Management of the Lower Lakes

Background

No background provided.

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association actively support the exploration of options and opportunities in relation to the Lower Lakes barrages including:

- a) review of future renewal activities to ensure the long term future and sustainability of the barrages (recognising the impacts of future sea level rises), and
- b) protect the Lower Lakes by reviewing the location and disposition of the barrages to ensure that opportunity is maximised, and
- c) explore opportunities for developing the barrages to maximise economic development opportunities, including the creation of vehicular and pedestrian access routes to connect key tourism destinations and to protect and maximise environmental benefits.

Moved: (Coorong District Council, R6)

5.11 Long Nosed Fur Seals

Background

No background provided.

That the Murray Darling Association support the removal of Long Nosed Fur Seals from the Murray River system including the Coorong and Lower Lakes for the following reasons:

- a) to protect the cultural lands of the Ngarrindjeri so that the Lower Lakes and Coorong be maintained in line with historical precedent,
- b) protect the vitality of the Coorong water ways and ecosystem including the RAMSAR site and other areas protected by international treaty, and
- c) ensure the future financial viability of sustainable wild catch fishing operations in the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray River, and
- d) maximise the use of the Coorong, Lower Lakes and River Murray for recreational and tourism purposes by improving the safety of the river system for boats and recreational craft.

Moved: (Coorong District Council, R6)

5.12 **Desalination and Clarence River diversions**

Background

No background provided.

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association promotes an investigation at a national level into the future needs of water users to accommodate the predicted population growth and economic development of the Murray Darling Basin and the towns and cities that rely on its water that will

- a) identify the conditional triggers for the use of desalination plants throughout the basin;
- b) consider a Clarence River diversion. This investigation be coordinated with the Federal, State and Local Governments affected by need for more water.

Moved: (Coorong District Council, R6)

5.13 **Climate Change**

Background

No background provided

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association lobby Federal and State Governments to

- a) **better recognise the impact that climate change will have on water being supplied to the Murray Darling Basin system,**
- b) **develop a secure alternative water source to supplement the system to maintain and create employment opportunities and feed our nation and the world while securing our clean, green image now and in the future, and**
- c) **work with and adequately resource local government to identify and manage impacts experienced at the local level.**

Moved: (Coorong District Council, R6)

5.14 **Blue Green Algae**

Background

No background provided

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association engage with the Federal Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources seeking funded solutions to address the recurring problem of blue-green algae in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Moved: Cr A Mangos (R7)

5.15 Motion for meeting critical human water needs

Background

Addressing the provision of secure and safe domestic water is a vexed issue for many regional Local Government Authorities (LGAs) in the Murray-Darling Basin. Some LGAs are responsible for domestic water services in towns and settlements but in cases where the populations are small they may be under resourced to meet either statutory requirements or community expectations and needs.

Farming and pastoral properties in rural and remote regions are expected to meet their own household requirements and ensure that the water is not a health risk. And this is done in the absence of any regulatory requirements. The safety of domestic water used on these properties is unknown.

The *Water Act 2007* (Cth) requires the preparation and adoption of a Basin Plan which provides for the integrated management of the Basin water resources including giving effect to the priority of critical human water needs. To this end, the Basin Plan is compatible with the human rights and freedoms recognised or declared in the international instruments listed in section 3 of the *Human Rights (Parliamentary Scrutiny) Act 2011* (Cth).

Critical human water needs are defined at subsection 86A(2) of the *Water Act 2007* (Cth) to include that required for core human needs (such as drinking, food preparation and hygiene), essential community services (including emergency services, hospitals and schools) and for limited commercial and industrial purposes.

The Murray Darling Association believes that meeting critical human water needs is a fundamental human right and the Basin Plan must be implemented and monitored so as to ensure that water resources that can only reasonably be provided from Basin, in order to meet core human and non-human requirements in urban and rural areas, are adequate, secure and safe for consumption. And a failure to meet this need would cause prohibitively high social, economic or national security costs.

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association continues to advocate strongly and lobby the Federal and State Ministers responsible for Water in the Murray Darling Basin to work collaboratively to ensure that:

- a) the objectives of the Basin Plan with respect to critical human water needs are being achieved and that towns, settlements and isolated rural properties not receiving piped water supplies have adequate secure and safe domestic water supplies**
- b) measures to help ensure critical human water needs are embedded in jurisdictional water management plans and are monitored to ensure that they are being met especially during times of drought or other exceptional circumstances that affect water quality or quantity**
- c) Local Government Authorities (LGAs) are appropriately and adequately resourced to provide or support the provision of secure and safe domestic water supplies to towns and settlements and on rural properties not receiving piped water supplies from either the surface or groundwater resources of the Basin**

Moved: (ILWS/CSU)

5.16 Collaborative research initiative for Securing Adequate Safe Domestic Water for Rural and Remote Regions

Background

Over the past years the MDA has been developing links with the ILWS-CSU and SEGRA Foundation and has explored a range of collaborative activities that could be of practical use for the parties. Particularly, the implementation of the Basin Plan with respect to understanding and proactively mitigating the economic, social and environmental impacts. Domestic water provision was one of the topics raised. Understanding how critical human water needs are going to be met under the pressures of changing climatic conditions and competing demands was seen a fundamental issue to be addressed.

A small team from the ILWS-CSU, Etheridge Shire Council (ESC) and Queensland Health (QHealth) have initiated a research collaborative to deliver the *SEGRA Challenge 2015-16, Securing Adequate Safe Domestic Water for Rural and Remote Regional Australia*. Other organisations and several universities are supporting the project.

The purposes for the collaborative research initiative are to:

- raise governmental and community awareness of the population and environmental health dimensions of the need to secure adequate safe domestic water supplies for communities
- develop and demonstrate a method that can be tailored to geographic and governance realities for systematically gathering information on ambient water quality, current water treatment practices and patterns of consumption
- survey the water quality and level of safe water provision in selected rural and remote catchment regions in the Northern Darling Basin
- determine the key impediments being faced by Local Government for the provision of adequate supplies of healthy domestic water to small communities and isolated properties

MDA participation in the research collaboration could provide a mechanism for members of the Association who are facing water provision and quality challenges to better understand how critical human water needs are being achieved. Additionally, project information can be used to more effectively lobby governments to ensure that Basin councils are appropriately and adequately resourced to provide or support the provision of secure and safe domestic water supplies to towns and settlements and on rural properties not receiving piped water supplies.

The Murray Darling Association believes that innovate collaborative research can provide essential information to: assess the adequacy and safety of domestic water for rural and remote towns, settlements and isolated properties within the Basin; raise awareness of potential environmental and population health risks; and confirm that critical human water needs are being met through the proactive implementation and monitoring of the Basin Plan.

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association express full support for the initiative aimed at securing adequate safe domestic water for rural and remote regions in the Basin and work collaboratively with the Institute for Land Water and Society (ILWS) at Charles Stuart University (CSU), the SEGRA Foundation (SEGRA) and other research partners, to the mutual benefit of member Councils.

Moved:

5.17 **Single Point of Contact River Murray Authority, SA**

Background

There are 15 Government Departments in South Australia that have various inputs and controls in relation to the Murray River. In addition, there are at least 7 other organisations (for example, the Boating Industry Association) and 7 Council's in South Australia that have jurisdiction over the Murray River. Other States have already implemented one authority in dealing with all matters associated with the Murray River. For example, it is understood that the New South Wales Road and Maritime is the one authority responsible.

Whilst the South Australian Murraylands and Riverland Local Government Association has raised the matter with the South Australian Government and State Government Departments are working to progress the 'One River Authority', it would be beneficial for the Murray Darling Association to also endorse this proposal.

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association supports and endorses

- a) **a One River Murray South Australian Authority to ensure improved uniformity of houseboat management, coordination of economic development activities including regional tourism and consistent regulation over the River Murray that stimulates development through meaningful planning and compliance policy, and**
- b) **the concept of a One River Murray Authority for other States as well.**

Moved: (Mid-Murray Council, R5)

5.18 **Tourism**

Background

Motion

That the Murray Darling Association support tourism activities in a proactive manner where they act to improve or support the operation of the water systems or bodies that participate in the sustainable operation of the Murray Darling river system (water quality and quantity).

Moved:

5.19 **Standard river height measurements**

Background

In some instances, depth of water (in metres) at a river height is measured at a gauge located along the river. In most cases, a zero reading is the lowest water level that is reached during dry conditions. In other instances river levels are expressed in metres above mean sea level or Australian Height Datum (AHD). The variation and inconsistency in our river level measuring systems creates difficulties for authorities and the public, particularly in communicating data for management and safety purposes. This can be particularly challenging in times of flood management.

Motion:

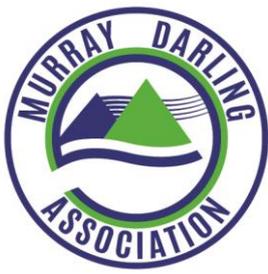
That the Murray Daring Association

- a) **call on state and federal water authorities to implement a standardized system of measuring and recording river heights at AHD across the Basin, and Australia.**
- b) **work with relevant authorities to support standardisation.**

6. NEXT MEETING

6.1 Location of 2018 AGM

7. CLOSE



Murray Darling Association Inc.

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www.mda.asn.au
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ABN: 64 636 490 493

463 High Street
P.O. Box 1268
Echuca, Vic 3564

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P.O. Box 359
Albury, NSW 2640

Annual General Meeting of the Murray Darling Association

Thursday 10 September 2015, commencing at 1:55 pm (AEST)

Location: Cobram Barooga Golf Club, Barooga

MINUTES

1. ATTENDANCE

1.1 Present

Mr Greg Toll	Region 2 Chair, National President - Individual Member
Mr Rodney Button	Region 8 Chair – Port Vincent Shire Council
Cr David Thurley	Region 1 Chair, Vice President – Albury City Council
Cr Oscar Aertssen	Region 3 Chair - Gannawarra Shire Council
Cr Judi Harris	Region 4 Proxy Chair - Mildura Rural City Council
Cr Kevin Myers	Region 5 Chair – Mid Murray Council
Cr Barry Featherston	Region 6 Chair – Alexandrina Council
Cr Peter Jamieson	Region 7 Chair, Treasurer – Port Adelaide Enfield Council
Cr Paul Maytom	Region 9 Chair – Leeton Shire Council
Mr Murray Wood	Region 10 Chair - Dubbo City Council
Ms Emma Bradbury	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Stan Gibney	Finance Manager
Ms Sandra Adams	Executive Assistant
Ms Alice Russell	Marketing and Communications Officer
Cr Jeff Shand	Deniliquin Shire Council
Cr Ruth McRae	Jerilderie Shire Council
Cr George Martin	Tumbarumba Shire Council
Cr Brian Hill	Berrigan Shire
Cr Dennis Brady	Lachlan Shire
Mr Bob Stewart	Tumut Shire Council
Cr Arthur Mangos	City of West Torrens
Cr Fiona Schirmer	Corowa Shire
Cr Steve O'Halloran	Balranald Shire Council
Cr Jim Howard	Narrandera Shire Council
Cr Peter Raison	Mid Murray Council
Cr Shirley Halls	City of Playford
Ms Pauline Frost	Life member
Cr Paul Rossetto	Griffith City Council
Cr Alan Urquhart	Urana Shire Council
Cr Don McPhee	Moira Shire Council
Cr Marie Martin	Moira Shire Council
Mr Don Oberin	Life member
Cr Vern Leng	Coorong Council
Cr Greg Conkey	Wagga Wagga City Council

Cr Donald Chambers	Indigo Shire
Cr Ian Moon	Murray Shire
Cr Graham Falconer	Forbes Shire
Cr Andrew Lewis	Bourke Shire Council
Mr Bede Spannagle	Riverina Water County Council
Cr Tony Quinn	Greater Hume Council
Cr Clem Schubert	Rural City of Murray Bridge
Cr Stuart Heriot	Greater Hume Council
Cr Mark Ward	Loxton Waikerie Council
Cr Ian Maddison	Campaspe Shire
Cr Marion Browne	Broken Hill City Council
Mr Mark Gooden	Private member
Mr Viv McGee	Private member
Cr Dennis Patterson	City of Greater Shepparton
Mr Geoff Mackenzie	Private member
Ms Gen Campbell	Private member
Mr Ken Patterson	Private member
Mr Ian Mann	Private member
Mr Peter Waterman	Private member
Ms Louise Burge	Private member
Mr Ray Stubbs	RAMROC
Cr Colin Jones	Berrigan Shire
Cr Brad Ferris	Albury City Council
Cr Owen Hasler	Gunnedah Shire Council
Mr Anthony Slatyer	Department of the Environment
Mr Richard Anderson	Victorian Farmers Federation
Cr Bill Anderson	Murray Shire
Mr Garry Hiscock	Riverina Water
Cr Brian Mattiske	Forbes Shire Council
Mr Simon Bradley	Rural City of Murray Bridge
Cr Denis Davey	City of Playford
Cr John Zobec	Campaspe Shire Council

MOTION: That the register of attendance be accepted

Kevin Myers/Don Chambers

CARRIED

1.2 Apologies

Hon Adrian Piccoli MP	Member for Murray (SA)
Mayor Peter Cox	City of Greater Bendigo
Mr Craig Niemann	City of Greater Bendigo
Cr Sue Rob	On behalf of Palerang City Council R9
Mayor Rosenberg	Onkaparinga Council
Mr Peter Johnson	Macedon Ranges Shire Council
Mr Michael Boyd	Central Darling Shire Council
Ms Katrina Humphries	Moree Plains Shire Council
Hon Steph Ryan MP	Deputy Leader of the Nationals
Mr Keith Scobie	Individual Member
Dr Sharman Stone MP	Member for Murray (Fed)
Mr Craig Moffitt	Jerilderie Shire Council
Hon Michael McCormack	Nationals Federal Member for Riverina
Mr Tony Pasin	Federal Member for Barker
Ms Christine Jones	

Mr Graeme Hannan	Goulburn Murray Water
Cr Glenn Milne	Mildura City Council
Hon Peter Walsh	Leader of the Nationals, Member for Murray Plains
Mr Steve Healy	Coliban Water
Hon Michelle Lensink MLC	Deputy Liberal Leader of the Legislative Council
Hon Vickie Chapman MP	Deputy State Liberal Leader SA
Hon Niall Blair	Minister for Lands and Water NSW
Mr Ken Jury	Marin & Aquatic Ecology
Mr Andrew Sherman	Russell Kennedy Pty Ltd
Hon Suzanna Sheed	Independent Member for Shepparton
Mr Gary Rodda	Murray Local Land Services
Cr Reichler	Brewarrina Shire Council
Hon Ian Hunter	Minister for Sustainability, Environment and Conservation and Minister for Water and the River Murray
Mr Daniel McLaughlin	Parks Victoria-Northern Rivers
Hon Adrian Pederick	Member for Hammond
Mr Tom Chesson	National Irrigators' Council
Mr Denis Flett	Victorian Environmental Water Holder
LGA	Cobar Shire Council
Senator Anne Ruston	Senate South Australia
Mr Luigi Basile	
Ms Barbara Hardy	
Ms Vicki Meyer	West Berriquin Irrigators
Mr Brad Drust	North Central Catchment Management Authority
Ms Heather Wilton	Greater Hume Shire Council
Mr Ray Najjar	Greenwood Holdings
Mr Adrian Wells	MDA
Mrs Dianne Wells	MDA
Cr Gary Norton	Swan Hill Rural City Council
Senator Bridget McKenzie	The Nationals Senate for Victoria
Cr Andrew Tilley	City of Mitcham
Hon Lisa Chesters	Member for Bendigo
Hon Mick Veitch	Shadow Minister for Lands and Water
Mr Michael Murray	Cotton Australia
Mr Geoff Kelly	McMedia
Hon Lisa Neville	Department of Environment, Land, Water & Planning
Jack Larkin	Murray Darling Association Life Member
Jim Hullick	Murray Darling Association Life Member
Cr Frank Verral	Region 7
Mr Max More	Murray Darling Association Life Member

MOTION: That the apologies be accepted

Denis Davey/Arthur Mangos

CARRIED

1.3 Declaration of Interests and Conflicts

None declared

2. PREVIOUS MINUTES

2.1 Meeting held Tuesday 14th October, 2014 in Tumut

MOTION: That the minutes of the previous AGM be accepted as a true and accurate record.

Arthur Mangos/Ian Mann

CARRIED

3. GENERAL BUSINESS

3.1 Voting Rights

The voting rights for the Murray Darling Association have for many years been unclear. Legal advice sought in advance of the 2014 AGM and considerable work by the board and membership in interpreting the provisions of the Constitution as currently written have failed to provide clarity in this area. For this reason the board of the Murray Darling Association resolved that the membership will determine the voting provisions for the 2015 AGM in advance of the motions being presented.

The constitution is currently being considered by Russell Kennedy Lawyers for drafting compliance. A revised constitution will be provided to regions for their comment and input during the 2015/16 year. Any anomalies in relation to the voting rights for future AGMs will be picked up as part of this process, incorporating feedback and input from the regions. The final draft of the constitution including voting rights will be presented at the 2016 AGM.

Following robust and vigorous debate, particularly in relation to the rights of individual members, the membership resolved to adopt the following provisions for voting entitlements to apply for the 2015 Annual General Meeting.

MOTION: That:

- a) the voting rights of the Murray Darling Association be reviewed in the coming year as part of the review of the constitution in consultation with the regions, and
- b) for the purpose of the 2015 AGM, the following voting entitlements, in accordance with previous practice, will apply

Membership Category	Entitlement
Local Govt/Council	Up to 3 votes, calculated at 1 vote per 20,000 head of population, or part thereof.
Individual Member	1 vote
Life Member	1 vote
Member of Parliament	No vote
Small business and NFP org, community group	1 vote
Corporation and Statutory Entity	1 vote

Tony Quinn/Jim Howard

CARRIED

Break for afternoon tea 2.40pm – 3.00pm

Voting cards were issued to individual members according to the resolution above, with all eligible voters duly registered.

4. REPORTS

4.1 Presentation of the 2015 Annual Report

National President Greg Toll noted that the Board of the Murray Darling Association is proud to present the Annual Report. It details a busy year categorized by growth and change, with much work still to be done in continuing to represent the interests of the members of this great organisation.

MOTION: That the membership of the MDA notes the 2014/15 Annual Report, as adopted by the Board.

Tony Quinn/Bob Stewart

CARRIED

4.2 Presentation of the 2015 Annual Financial Report

In presenting the Annual Financial Report, as adopted by the board Cr Peter Jamieson, Treasurer of the Murray Darling Association noted that the finances of the previous year had been carefully monitored by staff and the board, resulting in a positive financial position for the organisation for the year ahead.

The financial year, ended 30 June 2015, has been one of consolidation and considerable time and effort being spent on getting the financial information "correct and up to date".

The Board commend the staff, particularly Stan Gibney, Finance Manager, in the detailed analysis and preparation of the financial records of the Murray Darling Association.

Cr Jamieson noted that it is important for the regions to continue to work hard to grow the membership in their local areas by promoting the benefits of membership of the organisation.

MOTION: That the membership of the MDA notes the 2014/15 Annual Financial Report.

Peter Jamieson/Shirley Halls

CARRIED

4.3 Appointment of Auditor for 2015/2016

The membership was advised that MGR Accountants, of Sommerville Street Bendigo have been appointed by the Board in accordance with the Constitution s7.1.7.

It was noted that MGR have done a terrific job in delivering a timely and thorough audit process, supporting the organisation to meet its compliance obligations and ensure continually improving account keeping and management practices.

MOTION: That the membership of the MDA notes that MGR Accountants, of Sommerville Street Bendigo have been appointed by the Board in accordance with the Constitution s7.1.7

Oscar Aertssen/Pauline Frost

CARRIED

4.4 Announcement of the Board Appointments for 2015-16

National President announced the following board appointments for the year ahead.

National President
Vice President
Treasurer

Mr Greg Toll, Private Member
Cr David Thurley, Albury City Council
Cr Peter Jamieson, City of Port Adelaide Enfield

5. MOTIONS ON NOTICE

- 5.1 **MOTION:** That the Murray Darling Association continues to advocate strongly for legislation for a 1500 gegalitre cap on water purchases in the Basin to be passed in the Parliament, acknowledging that the legislation is before the Parliament at the time of this AGM.

Paul Rosetto/Terry Hogan CARRIED

- 5.2 **MOTION:** That the Murray Darling Association continues to advocate strongly for the Water Act 2007 (Cth) to be amended to
- a) give greater flexibility in the trade of water to deliver stronger environmental, social and economic benefits to basin communities by allowing for re-investment in works and measures, and other options to enhance water efficiencies, and
 - b) require that at the end of each season, independent monitoring, evaluation and audit of the activities of the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder are undertaken and reported back to both the federal government and the basin community.

Jim Howard/Ruth McRae CARRIED

- 5.3 **MOTION:** That the Murray Darling Association continues to advocate strongly and lobby the Federal and State Ministers responsible for Water within the Murray Darling Basin to amend the Basin Plan to require consideration of and reporting against social, economic and environmental impacts of decisions taken, and implementation strategies under the plan.

Terry Hogan/Tony Quinn CARRIED

- 5.4 **MOTION:** That the Murray Darling Association continues to advocate strongly that the Murray Darling Basin Authority must ensure that the proposed 2,750GL of environmental water to be recovered under the plan can be efficiently, effectively and safely delivered with improved social, economic and environmental effects.

Ken Pattison/Shirley Hall CARRIED

- 5.5 **MOTION:** That the Murray Darling Association seek a formal investigation into
- a) the effects of speculation by non-productive holders of water licenses in the Murray Darling Basin.
 - b) suggested methodologies that could inhibit the purchase of water licenses solely for speculative purposes as opposed to productive use.
 - c) the costs and benefits of re-bundling water licenses with land ownership.

Dennis Patterson/Rodney Button CARRIED

- 5.6 It had been proposed that the Murray Darling Association support the development of a national water plan. Broad support was acknowledged for the intention of this action. The mover and seconder of the motion then proposed that more work be done at the regional level to develop the concept in order to give greater weight to the objective.

MOTION: That the MDA supports the development of a National Water Plan.

Terry Hogan/Viv McGee LAID ON THE TABLE

- 5.7 **MOTION:** That the Murray Darling Association pursue a regional economic structural adjustment and resolve to:
- a) Adopt a social wellbeing and economic development focus, working with communities through engagement and consultation;
 - b) Promote water 'education'; and
 - c) Provide strong regional advocacy and leadership.

Neil Gorey/Oscar Aertssen CARRIED

- 5.8 **MOTION:** That the Murray Darling Association negotiates directly with the responsible authority in each of Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria to develop a project to have signs installed on all highways and main roads entering the Murray Darling Basin in order to give effect to the concept that "You are now entering the Murray Darling Basin".

Don McPhee/Marie Martin LOST

Alternate motion: That the Murray Darling Association report back with costings for such a project.

Moved: Arthur Mangos LAPSED

An alternate proposal was discussed, and generally agreed, although was not put to the vote: That the Murray Darling Association negotiates directly with the MDBA to consider the merits of a joint project to have appropriate signage and branding to identify the Murray Darling Basin for the purposes of public interest and education.

- 5.9 Debate regarding the motion that the Murray Darling Association
- a) oppose, and advocate strongly against the approval granted for an open cut coal mine on the Liverpool Plains in the Murray Darling Basin, and
 - b) demand that urgent consideration be given to the withdrawal of such approval was lively and extensive. Key points of the debate are summarized as:

General comments

- Acknowledgement of Mayor of Gunnedah for his attendance at the conference and his contribution in providing a local perspective in the presentation the day before.
- Acknowledgement of the representatives of Shenhua Watermark Coal for their attendance at the conference to provide information on the project and its planning and approval processes.

Summary of arguments for the motion

- Councils want to protect prime agricultural lands.
- Need to maintain a sustainable basin.
- Protection of water assets.
- If a coal mine can be approved on the Liverpool plains, can occur anywhere.
- Mining licences have been granted in the past, only to find the assessments were not vigorous enough.
- Overseas mines have had devastating impacts on water resources.

Summary of arguments against the motion

- Recognition that the project is not actually on the Liverpool Plains, but near to.
- Media reporting appears to have been not entirely accurate.
- Important that decisions are made based on accurate, local knowledge.
- The project has passed State and Federal EIA and other approval processes .
- Any formal opposition to the project needs to be based in evidence and lodged in the appropriate way.
- Many councils support mines in their local areas, as they provide economic stimulus and diversity of employment.
- It is a risk for the MDA to oppose the project without full knowledge of the risks and merits.
- Local, state and federal authorities have assessed the risk and merits.
- Opposition to the motion is consistent with the MDA's policy on Unconventional Gas extractions which states that
 - "[The MDA will] oppose ... mining and exploration ... except where adequate guarantees based in science can demonstrate that there will be no adverse impact on the aquifers and ground water storage environment"; and
 - "[The MDA will] always be focused on the environment and local communities in pursuing this policy." (A full copy of the MDA's policy position on unconventional gas extraction can be found on our website at www.mda.asn.au)

** As a non-members neither the Mayor of Gunnedah nor the representatives of the Shenhua Watermark project are eligible to participate in the debate or the vote.*

MOTION: That the Murray Darling Association

- a) oppose, and advocate strongly against the approval granted for an open cut coal mine on the Liverpool Plains in the Murray Darling Basin, and
- b) demand that urgent consideration be given to the withdrawal of such approval

Bob Stewart/Dennis Brady LOST

5.10 The debate regarding the motion that the Murray Darling Association call on government, both State and Federal to develop a policy to protect food producing lands from mining and resource and other conflicting development in the Murray Darling Basin was also lively and extensive. Key issues raised included:

- Definition of mining should include 'water mining' for bottled water.
- Importance of protecting food producing land and water to ensure productive capacity.
- Productive land has been given up to sand mining with Council support in the Rural City of Mildura.
- Need for consistency with the MDA's policy on Mining and Unconventional Gas extraction, adopted AGM 2014.
- Sand mining currently exists in Mungo National Park.
- Importance of maintaining appropriate balance.

MOTION: That the Murray Darling Association call on government, both State and Federal to develop a policy to protect food producing lands from mining and resource and other conflicting development in the Murray Darling Basin.

Bob Stewart/Dennis Brady CARRIED

Cr Steve O'Halloran from Balranald Shire Council asked for it to be noted that he voted against Motion 5.10.

6. ANNOUNCEMENT OF 2017 AGM LOCATION

The Board resolved that Region 5 have been offered the opportunity to host the 73rd MDA National Conference and AGM in 2017.

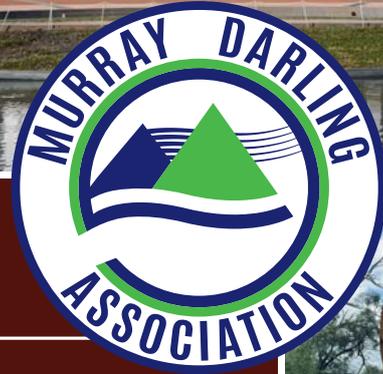
7. MOTIONS FOR 2016 AGM

Regions are reminded that motions for consideration at the National Conference are required to be proposed via a resolution of the region, and forwarded to the executive for distribution at least two months prior to the conference – which will be held in Dubbo in October next year.

8. MEETING CLOSED: 4:15 pm AEST



Attachment 4.1



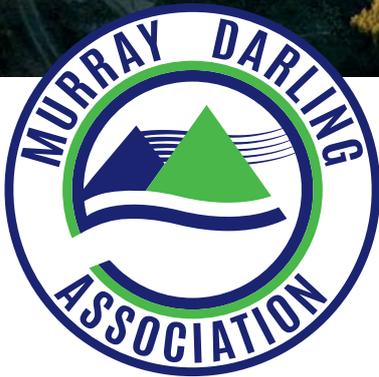
2015-16

Annual Report

It's in the balance



Local Government: Voice of the Basin



72nd annual report of the Murray Darling Association Inc: 2015-16

Incorporated under the Association's Incorporation Act 1984 NSW
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WHAT IS THE MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION?

The Murray Darling Association, MDA, is a membership-based peak representative organisation, representing local government and communities across the Murray Darling Basin.

The Basin covers 14pc of the land mass of Australia.

There are 179 local government organisations across the Basin whose communities derive their wellbeing from the resources of the area.

Over eighty of these organisations are currently members of the MDA, with a target of 100pc membership.

The MDA provides local government with the means and opportunity to actively participate in informing water policy.

“If the MDA didn't exist, we'd have to invent it,” claims Hon Craig Knowles, Chairman Murray Darling Basin Authority 2011-15, Forbes 2014

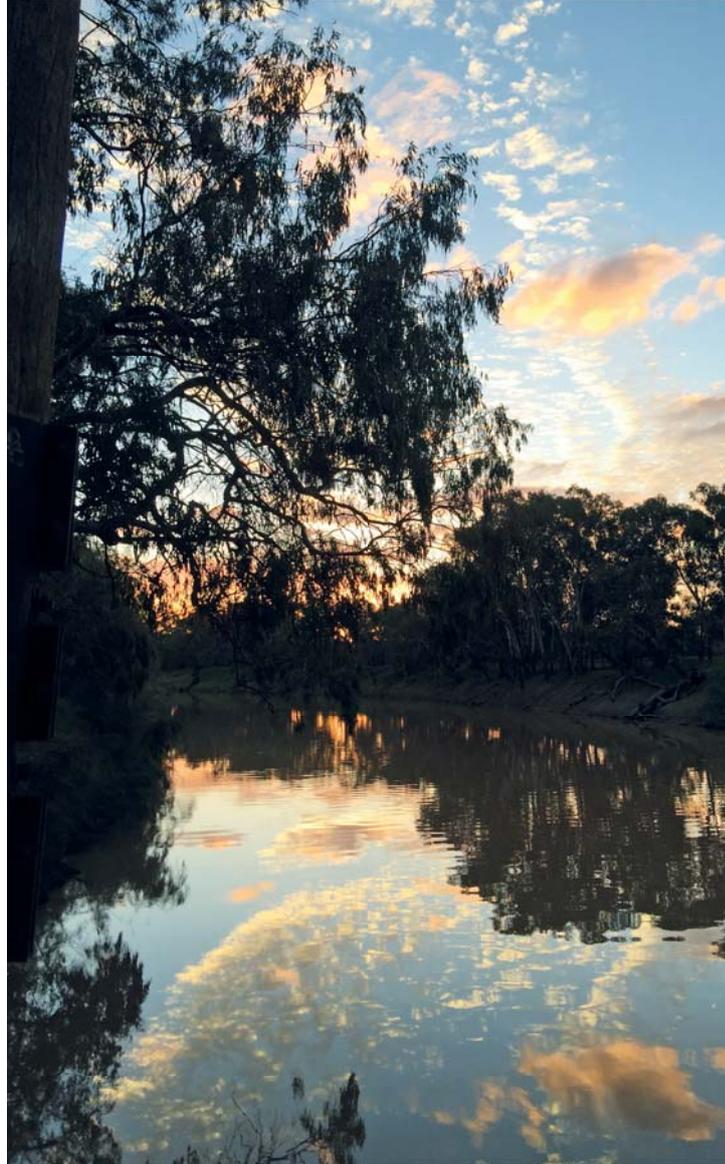
OUR HISTORY

The Murray Darling Association initially formed in 1944.

Its objective was to provide sufficient water supplies and hydro-electricity in support of sustainable production in agriculture, business and industry across the basin.

Importantly, the MDA was instrumental in securing support for the Snowy River Diversion and its associated hydro electricity scheme.

Today, with the implementation of the Basin Plan impacting every community across the basin, the purpose of the MDA has never had greater relevance.



PROUD TO ANNOUNCE THESE ACHIEVEMENTS IN 2016

In support of our theme: Local Government - the Voice of the Basin, the Murray Darling Association can announce a very successful year of achievements including:

- launch of our Strategic Plan 2016-19
- finalisation of our Constitutional Review
- proposal of the Basin Plan Implementation Impacts Evaluation Framework - project proposal (easy for you to say!)

Our strategic objectives for the year ahead include developing the strength and voice of our regions through active engagement by and of our member councils.



WELCOME

Is this really another year in review?

Now in our 72nd, we reflect here on a year of solid achievements, significant reform, and new growth in our organisation.

Highlights include: the publication of our Strategic Plan 2016-19, the extensive consultation that has driven the review of our Constitution, and our proposal for the development of a framework that will help all communities and levels of government to measure and assess the social and economic impacts of the implementation of the Basin Plan.

With this work, the MDA has now set the foundations to ensure local government is recognised in its rightful place working alongside our state and federal government counterparts to deliver the best possible outcomes under the Basin Plan for the communities we represent.

The MDA, as the collective voice of local government on Basin issues is uniquely placed to ensure local knowledge, and effective collaboration delivers Basin-wide solutions to the challenges facing our rural and regional communities.

On behalf of the Murray Darling Association, we would like to thank those of you who have helped shape the Strategic Plan 2016-19.



This Plan also provides a platform for genuine local government and community collaboration to understand the issues facing our regions.

Working together, with local government at the core of our membership we can achieve cost efficiencies, generate best practice, stimulate informed debate, identify positive outcomes and most importantly, recognise our shared future.

As you will see in the following report, there have been a number of significant projects launched and achievements completed, all in the context of a new era for the MDA.

Our thanks must go to the members past and present of our board, and their supporting councils, all of whom have worked hard throughout the year to deliver on our ambitious program, and set the foundations for an even greater year ahead!

With your active participation, our voice will be as strong as we make it!

Cr David Thurley
National President

Emma Bradbury
Chief Executive Officer

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The Murray Darling Association's board is constituted by representatives of the Chairing Council of the twelve regions of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Each region is comprised of local government areas and municipalities that share common interests, resources, catchments and environmental systems.

BOARD MEMBERS 2015-16

Region 1	National President	Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council
Region 2	Chairperson	Mr Des Bilske	Edwards River Council
Region 3	Chairperson	Mayor Leigh Byron	Balranald Shire Council
Region 4	Chairperson	Mr Gerard Jose	Mildura Rural City Council
Region 5	Chairperson	Cr Kevin Myers	Mid-Murray Council
Region 6	Vice President	Cr Barry Featherston	Alexandrina Council
Region 7	Treasurer	Cr Peter Jamieson	City of Port Adelaide Enfield
Region 8	Vacant		
Region 9	Chairperson	Mayor Paul Maytom	Leeton Shire Council
Region 10	Chairperson	Mr Murray Wood	Dubbo City Council
Region 11 & 12	Vacant		

STAFF 2015-16

Ms Emma Bradbury	Chief Executive Officer
Mr Peter Gray	Finance Manager
Ms Dianne Ross	Office Manager
Mr Nathan Giles	Volunteer



VALE

Farewell to Life Member, David Dalzell. From Whyalla, David was treasurer for many years serving on the Board from the early 1990s. Instrumental in establishing the association's Foundation in 1996, David also played a key role in the association's foray into projects and consultancies.

LIFE MEMBERS

Mr Graham Camac Meningie SA
Mr Max Moor Barmah NSW
Ms Pauline Frost Adelaide SA
Mr Phillip Moore Melbourne Vic
Mr Don Oberin Echuca Vic
Mr Les Hill Berri SA
Mr Brian J Grogan OAM Mildura Vic
Mr Ken Rogers Dubbo City NSW
Dr Terry Hillman AM Lavington NSW
Mr Phillip Potter Narooma NSW
Mr Jim Hullick OAM Adelaide SA
Mr Wulf Reichler Brewarrina NSW
Mr Jack James Larkin OAM Spring Gully Qld
Mr J Bede Mecham Wagga Wagga NSW
Mr Kevin Pell OAM Nathalia Vic
Mr Bill Gorman Mulwala NSW



BASIN PLAN IMPLEMENTATION IMPACTS EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The MDA is committed to develop a rigorous and repeatable Basin Plan impacts evaluation framework and methodology against which the social and economic impacts of the plan can be measured and assessed.

We recognise that we must be able to identify and distinguish short term, unrelated, and one-off impacts from the underlying performance of the Plan, and we have partnered with the Western Research Institute to engage the technical expertise required to develop a sound methodology.

With an effective assessment tool, the MDA aims to enable our members and stakeholders to:

- identify social and economic impacts to rural and regional communities as a result of the Basin Plan
- distinguish short term and one off impacts from the underlying performance of the Basin Plan
- identify and develop targeted solutions

- enable better region-wide decision-making and the development of regional solutions
- identify and clarify stakeholder responsibility
- strengthen the credibility and efficacy of our advocacy
- promote evidence-based decision-making.

These are significant benefits that will provide evidence-based data upon which communities and the responsible authorities can rely on to build shared understandings and better relationships as the implementation of the Basin Plan progresses.

For a full copy of the project proposal go to: <http://www.mda.asn.au>.





A NEW BEGINNING FOR A BRIGHTER FUTURE

Since its foundation in 1944, the MDA has boasted an enviable passion and commitment of our members, and an essential priority of purpose.

As with any organisation, the need for clear direction and good governance is a constant imperative.

The definitive history *Up and Doing: A brief history of the Murray Valley Development League and the Murray Darling Association from 1944 to 2014* by Adrian Wells notes that the question of whether to disband or fight-on has been considered by the board of the MDA on more than one occasion, from as far back as 1952.

And so too it was in 2015.

Lacking direction and fighting confusion over voting rights at consecutive AGMs; a decline in memberships; increase in expectations; financial uncertainty; compliance gaps; and high turnover at board level, a turning point emerged for the MDA.

At this cross-road, the board considered the challenges and the options before it.

On this occasion, as before, the board, our members and stakeholders across all levels of government have been resolute.

**Our purpose is essential.
We will endure.**

The resilience of the MDA is equal to the communities we represent.

Some tough decisions, hard work, and dogged determination later, the board resolved unanimously to take the steps necessary to develop and deliver an effective and essential strategy.

The result is a lean, focused and dynamic organisation, valued and respected for its proud history, hard work, and commitment. We stand firm to represent local government for the benefit of the communities of the Murray-Darling Basin.

A new era begins for the MDA.



OUR MEMBERS

The MDA has four categories of membership:

- **Member Council**
- **Member Organisation**
- **Individual Member**
- **Life Member.**

179 municipalities are connected with and derive their wellbeing from the resources of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Councils provide over 97pc of our core funding, and are the foundation and future of our organisation.

Local government members pay a membership fee based on population size, and are represented by delegates to the MDA, usually the Mayor and CEO or GM.

Supported by organisations, staffed by skilled and experienced professionals, and

informed by a diverse make-up of elected representatives, local government is the primary MDA membership category.

Member organisations and individuals ensure that there is always a broad representation of social and economic interests and experience from across the community to inform the discussion at the regional level.

Each region is entitled to elect a number of delegates from these categories to represent them and vote at the National Conference and AGM.

Life members are recognised for their outstanding contribution to Basin communities. They have and continue to contribute a wealth of knowledge and experience to the MDA.

OUR CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNANCE

In 2014, the Board resolved to review the Constitution for compliance with current legislation.

The stated objectives of the review were to:

- resolve all ambiguity as to membership rights and voting entitlements
- establish a voting structure that provided equity for members, and re-established the primacy of the voice of local government
- to retain, wherever possible, the founding intent articulated in the current constitution.

Andrew Sherman, an awarded expert in Local Government Law and Water Law of Russell Kennedy Lawyers was approached to provide legal advice. Andrew agreed

to work with the MDA to assist with the review, drawing on both his expertise and the many years of association with the MDA.

Since then an extensive program of consultation, engagement and review has been undertaken with the membership through the regional meetings. A further session at the strategic planning workshop, in Echuca in February provided board members as regional reps to further contribute to the process.

The result is a comprehensive and compliant constitution, fit for purpose, and able to take our organisation into the future with clarity and confidence.

The Constitution 2016 is commended to the membership for adoption at the 2016 National Conference and AGM.

SHARING THE VISION OF A HEALTHY MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

Through the prism of local government, we all aspire to support economic growth and development; healthy, happy, vibrant people; and a sustainable natural and built environment.

How we achieve that aspiration will vary from council to council, region to region, state to state.

We recognise that our regions represent the interests, issues and circumstances of a wide array of communities across a vast tract of the Australian continent.

The councils of the MDA work together to better understand the unique issues that define, challenge and shape our regions.

In the year ahead, our regions will continue this work to develop regional strategic plans and advocacy priorities that will help inform policy and achieve shared solutions.



COUNCILS OF THE MURRAY-DARLING BASIN

REGION ONE Chair Albury City Council, Cr David Thurley

Albury City Council	Baw Baw Shire Council	Snowy Monaro Shire Council
Federation Council	Benalla Rural City Council	Wangaratta Rural City Council
Indigo Shire Council	East Gippsland Shire Council	Wodonga City Council
Towong Shire Council	Greater Hume Shire Council	
Alpine Shire Council	Mansfield Shire Council	

REGION TWO Chair Edwards River Council, Mr Des Bilske

Berrigan Shire Council	Edward River Council	Mitchell Shire Council
Campaspe Shire Council	Greater Bendigo City Council	Murrindindi Shire Council
Murray River Council	Greater Shepparton City Council	Strathbogie Shire Council
Moira Shire Council	Macedon Ranges Shire Council	Whittlesea City Yarra Ranges Shire Council

REGION THREE Chair Balranald Shire Council, Cr Leigh Byron

Gannawarra Shire Council	Balranald Shire Council	Moorabool Shire Council
Loddon Shire Council	Buloke Shire Council	Mount Alexander Shire Council
Murray River Council	Central Goldfields Shire Council	Northern Grampians Shire
Ararat Rural City Council	Hepburn Shire Council	Pyrenees Shire Council
Ballarat City Council	Horsham Rural City Council	Swan Hill Rural City Council

REGION FOUR Chair Mildura Rural City Council, Mr Gerard José

Broken Hill City Council	Wentworth Shire Council	Yarriambiack Shire Council
Central Darling Shire	Hindmarsh Shire Council	
Mildura Rural City Council	West Wimmera Shire Council	

REGION FIVE Chair Mid-Murray Council, Cr Kevin Myers

District Council of Loxton Waikerie	Mid Murray Council	District Council of Karoonda East Murray
Renmark Paringa Council	Berri Barmera Council	

REGION SIX Chair Alexandrina Council, Cr Barry Featherston

Alexandrina Council	The Rural City of Murray Bridge	Southern Mallee District Council
Coorong District Council	City of Victor Harbour	
Tatiara District Council	Kingston District Council	

REGION SEVEN Chair City Of Port Adelaide Enfield, Cr Peter Jamieson

Campbelltown City Council	Town of Walkerville	City of Salisbury
City of Burnside	Adelaide City Council	City of Tea Tree Gully
City of Holdfast Bay	City of Charles Sturt	City of Unley
City of Norwood Payneham & St Peters	City of Marion	District Council of Yankalilla
City of Playford	City of Mitcham	The District Council of Mount Barker
City of West Torrens	City of Onkaparinga	Town of Gawler
Northern Areas Council	City of Port Adelaide Enfield	
	City of Prospect	

REGION EIGHT Vacant

District Council of Barunga West	The District Council of Mallala	Whyalla City Council
District Council of Orroroo/Carrieton	The District Council of Mount Remarkable	Wakefield Regional Council
District Council of Yorke Peninsula	The District Council of Peterborough	Adelaide Hills Council
Light Regional Council	Port Pirie Regional Council	Clare and Gilbert Valleys Council
Port Pirie Regional Council	The Regional Council of Goyder	District Council of the Copper Coast
The Barossa Council		Port Augusta City Council

REGION NINE Chair Leeton Shire Council, Mayor Paul Maytom

Griffith City Council	Wagga Wagga City Council	June Shire Council
Gundagai Shire Council	Australian Capital Territory Government	Palerang Council
Hay Shire Council	Bega Valley Shire Council	Queanbeyan City Council
Leeton Shire Council	Coolamon Shire Council	Temora Shire Council
Lockhart Shire Council	Cootamundra Shire Council	Weddin Shire Council
Murrumbidgee Shire Council	Eurobodalla Shire Council	Yass Valley Council
Narrandera Shire Council	Carrathool Shire Council	Hilltops Shire Council
Tumut Shire Council		

REGION TEN Chair Dubbo City Council, Mr Murray Wood

Bourke Shire Council	Cabonne Council	Orange City Council
Forbes Shire Council	City of Lithgow Council	Parkes Shire Council
Lachlan Shire Council	Cobar Shire Council	Singleton Shire Council
Narromine Shire Council	Cowra Shire Council	Upper Hunter Shire Council
Warren Shire Council	Gilgandra Shire Council	Upper Lachlan Shire Council
Bathurst Regional Council	Goulburn Mulwaree Council	Warrumbungle Shire Council
Bogan Shire Council	Mid-Western Regional Council	Wellington Shire
Bland Shire Council	Muswellbrook Shire Council	Western Plains Regional Council
Blayney Shire Council	Oberon Council	

REGION ELEVEN Vacant

Brewarrina Shire Council	Glen Innes Severn Council	Liverpool Plains Shire
Coonamble Shire Council	Goondiwindi Regional Council	Narrabri Shire Council
Gwydir Shire Council	Gunnedah Shire Council	Tamworth Regional Council
Moree Plains Shire Council	Guyra Shire Council	Tenterfield Shire Council
Walgett Shire Council	Inverell Shire Council	Uralla Shire Council
Armidale Dumaresq Council		Walcha Council

REGION TWELVE Vacant

Paroo Shire Council	Bulloo Shire Council	Murweh Shire Council
Southern Downs Regional Council	Central Highlands Regional Council	Quilpie Shire Council
Toowoomba Regional Council	Goondiwindi Regional Council	Scenic Rim Regional Council
Balonne Shire Council	Lockyer Valley Regional Council	South Burnett Regional Council
Blackall Tambo Regional Council	Maranoa Regional Council	Western Downs Regional Council

For all MDA info, go to: mda.asn.au

Our members and the interested public are informed of projects, meetings, documents, opportunities, partnerships, in fact anything to do with Murray Darling Association, at our website.

Hand in hand with our rejuvenated social media, you can experience realtime online communications at:

- mda.asn.au
- twitter.com/MurrayDarlingAs
- facebook.com/pages/Murray-Darling-Association-Inc



MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING

BETWEEN

Murray–Darling Basin Authority (MDBA)

and

Murray Darling Association Inc. (MDA)

The parties seek to establish a strategic alliance which will maximise their collective energies, engagement and influence for the overall benefit of the Murray–Darling Basin and the communities dependent on the basin's resources, via the implementation of the Basin Plan.

The parties recognise the importance of mutual cooperation, consultation and knowledge sharing, and through respect and commitment to their ongoing relationship have hereby reached the following understanding:

The Parties

The MDBA was established under the Commonwealth Water Act 2007 as an independent, expertise-based statutory agency. Its role includes advising a six-member Authority, of which the Chief Executive is a member, about Basin-wide strategy, policy and planning. MDBA undertakes activities that support the sustainable and integrated management of the water resources of the Murray–Darling Basin in a way that best meets the social, economic and environmental needs of the basin and its communities.

The MDA was founded in 1944 as the Murray Valley Development League. It is an association of local government municipalities in New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia, and Victoria, as well as community groups, businesses, individuals and agencies with an interest in ensuring that the Murray–Darling Basin continues as a viable and valuable asset for all Australians.

The MDA provides a focus for local government and community participation in the major natural resource issues of the Murray–Darling Basin. It provides information, facilitates debate, identifies needs and priorities, undertakes projects and education initiatives, and promotes research. Since 1944, the MDA has contributed to a number of important initiatives. These include water conservation, decentralisation, tourism, the Snowy Scheme, catchment management, water quality, regional development, formation of the Murray–Darling Basin Ministerial Council, promotion of dry land salinity control measures and developed awareness and managed pest plants and animals.

The Nature of the Collaboration

Local government clearly plays a key role in the governance of the Murray–Darling Basin. The MDBA places a great importance on knowledge generation and access to that knowledge by its community partners so that effective water management decision making is supported. The MDBA thereby recognises the valuable role of the MDA in drawing on local government knowledge from across the basin and respects its insight, expertise and understanding of its more than 100 member local government councils and of the wider community membership throughout and beyond the Murray–Darling Basin. The importance of working closely with the MDA will remain crucial as the MDBA continues to advance water reform activities in the basin.

The MDA recognises the MDBA as the primary body for the coordinated management of water resources in the Murray–Darling Basin, with the responsibility for establishing and pursuing the directives and policies as set out under the Water Act, the Basin Plan, in the Murray–Darling Basin Agreement, and as directed by the Murray–Darling Basin Ministerial Council.

This Memorandum of Understanding will be reviewed after five years of its date of signing.

Shared Objectives

In recognition of the commonality of the work undertaken and therefore the mutual challenges faced, both parties agree:

1. The inter-relationship between an informed basin community and good decision making is acknowledged and both parties will strive to reach excellence in information exchange and collaboration. This may include providing advice, if possible, on relevant matters if requested by the other party, regularly providing relevant and up-to-date information to the other party and cooperating to provide the best possible local government and community engagement and representation on key water management issues.
2. Local government issues within the Murray–Darling Basin should be given due consideration in the implementation of basin policies and programs.
3. To attend, where possible, or provide opportunities to disseminate relevant material at each party's respective meetings, forums and conferences.

Specifically:

- the MDBA chairman and/or chief executive will confer quarterly with the MDA president and/or general manager to provide updates and exchange information.
- the parties will mutually support and, where appropriate, promote information exchange between themselves, constituent members (local authorities) and government agencies as appropriate.
- involve the MDA in the gathering and collection of data as it relates to the MDBA's monitoring and evaluation framework and reporting requirements dealing with social and economic impacts. The MDBA will consider resource implications of such work and will assist where appropriate.

Resourcing and Financial Arrangements

This document is not intended to create binding or legal obligations on either party. Neither party has any authority to act on behalf of other parties unless specifically granted.

Both parties shall ensure that there is a direct reporting line in their respective organisations to facilitate efficient and timely information exchange.

Both parties agree to make available and cover any costs of such of their staff and resources, as they may separately find possible and appropriate, to work on and mutually benefit from the collaboration.

Intellectual Property

Nothing in this Memorandum of Understanding amounts to a licence or transfer of any intellectual property or information disclosed. Each of the parties agrees to keep as commercial-in-confidence information disclosed by the other party on a confidential basis.

Marketing and Publicity

Both parties agree to consult each other and gain consent before publicly promoting any joint collaboration that may arise from this Memorandum of Understanding.

Review and Evaluation

Parties shall endeavour, where possible to regularly visit local government bodies for proper review and evaluation of the benefits of infrastructure investments made as a result of Basin Plan initiatives or other factors that have resulted in new investments for those local government communities and regions, where multiple local councils are sharing investment and working together.

For and on behalf of MDBA

The Hon Craig Knowles – Chairman MDBA

Date 12.08.2013

For and on behalf of MDA

Mr. Ken Rogers – President MDA

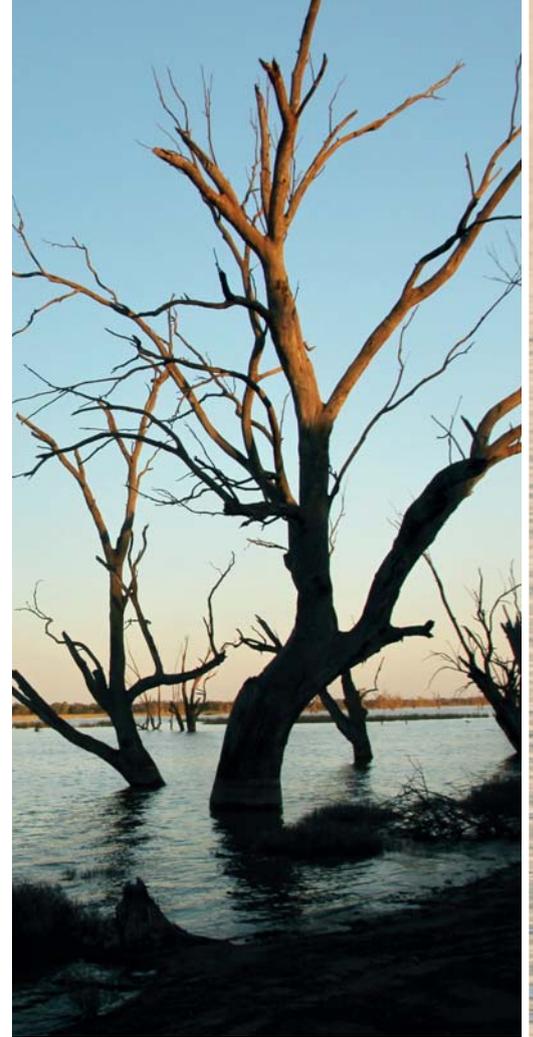
Date 13.11.13



Working together with the
MDA for the overall benefit
of the Murray Darling Basin
and its communities.

PRESIDENTS

DG Padman	Albury City Council	1944-5
JG Strangman	District Council of Waikerie	1952-56
Henry Lester Smith OBE	Gannawarra Shire Council	1956-60
E Verco Whyte	Wentworth Shire Council	1960-65
Robert S Rankin OBE	Shire of Campaspe	1965-68
Tom E Pearsall	Albury City Council	1968-71
Paul Gerard Schmidt	District Council of Mannum	1971-74
Jim W Gemmell	Moirra Shire Council	1974-77
Jack J Larkin OAM	Swan Hill Shire	1977-82
Don K Oberin	Shire of Campaspe	1982-86
Jim M Hullick OAM	Adelaide City Council	1986-89
Graham C Camac	Coorong District Council	1989-92
Max Moor	Moirra Shire Council	1992-98
Ray Trestrail	Albury City Council	1998-2000
Brian Sharp OAM	Shire of Murray	2000-03
Brian J Grogan OAM	Mildura Rural Council	2003-06
Bill Gorman	Corowa Shire Council	2006-09
Ken Rogers	Dubbo City Council	2009-13
Cr Greg Toll	Shire of Campaspe	2013-15
Cr David Thurley	Albury City Council	2015-



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETINGS

1	1945	Albury NSW	25	1969	Waikerie SA	49	1993	Wentworth NSW
2	1946	Shepparton Vic	26	1970	Mildura Vic	50	1994	Yarrowonga Vic
3	1947	Murray Bridge SA	27	1971	Kerang Vic	51	1995	Broken Hill NSW
4	1948	Swan Hill Vic	28	1972	Murray Bridge SA	52	1996	Barmera SA
5	1949	Wentworth NSW	29	1973	Echuca Vic	53	1997	Swan Hill Vic
6	1950	Berri SA	30	1974	Corowa NSW	54	1998	Strathalbyn SA
7	1951	Corowa NSW	31	1975	Loxton SA	55	1999	Moama NSW
8	1952	Victor Harbor	32	1976	Wodonga Vic	56	2000	Brewarrina NSW
9	1953	Albury NSW	33	1977	Camberwell Vic	57	2001	Buronga NSW
10	1954	Mildura Vic	34	1978	Swan Hill Vic	58	2002	Whyalla SA
11	1955	Kerang Vic	35	1979	Berri SA	59	2003	Corowa NSW
12	1956	Melbourne Vic	36	1980	Deniliquin NSW	60	2004	Renmark SA
13	1957	Barmera SA	37	1981	Wentworth NSW	61	2005	Dubbo NSW
14	1958	Deniliquin NSW	38	1982	Murray Bridge SA	62	2006	Barham NSW
15	1959	Mt Beauty Vic	39	1983	Echuca Vic	63	2007	Bourke NSW
16	1960	Renmark SA	40	1984	Adelaide SA	64	2008	Leeton NSW
17	1961	Swan Hill Vic	41	1985	Jerilderie	65	2009	Elizabeth SA
18	1962	Albury NSW	42	1986	Mildura Vic	66	2010	Beechworth Vic
19	1963	Victor Harbor SA	43	1987	Albury NSW	67	2011	Dalby Qld
20	1964	Mildura Vic	44	1988	Renmark SA	68	2012	Mildura Vic
21	1965	Yarrowonga Vic	45	1989	Barham NSW	69	2013	Goolwa SA
22	1966	Adelaide SA	46	1990	Murray Bridge SA	70	2014	Tumut NSW
23	1967	Shepparton Vic	47	1991	Cobram Vic	71	2015	Berrigan NSW
24	1968	Deniliquin NSW	48	1992	Whyalla SA	72	2016	Dubbo NSW

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

COMMITTEE REPORT

Your committee members submit the financial report of Murray Darling Association Inc. for the financial year ended 30 June 2016.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS

The names of the committee members in office at any time during or since the end of the year are:

Cr David Thurley	National President	Elected Dec 2015
Cr Barry Featherston	Vice President	Elected Aug 2015
Cr Peter Jamieson	Treasurer	
Cr David Thurley	Chair Region 1	
Mr Des Bilske	Chair Region 2	Jan 2016
Cr Leigh Byron	Chair Region 3	May 2016
Gerard José (Acting)	Chair Region 4	Feb 2016
Cr Kevin Myers	Chair Region 5	
Cr Barry Featherston	Chair Region 6	Aug 2015
Cr Peter Jamieson	Chair Region 7	
Vacant	Chair Region 8	
Cr Paul Maytom	Chair Region 9	
Mr Murray Wood	Chair Region 10	
Vacant	Chair Region 11	
Vacant	Chair Region 12	
Cr Greg Toll	Region 2	Resigned Dec 2015
Cr Oscar Aertssen	Region 3	Resigned Nov 2015
Cr Judi Harris	Region 4	Retired Aug 2015
Cr Frank Tuckwell	Region 6	Retired Aug 2015
Mr Rodney Button	Region 8	Retired Jan 2016

PUBLIC OFFICER

Cr Emma Bradbury	Public Officer	Jan 2016
Mr Bill Gorman	Public Officer	Retired Jan 2016

PRINCIPAL ACTIVITIES

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were:

To provide effective representation of local government and communities of the Murray Darling Basin at state and federal level in the management of Basin Resources by providing information, facilitating informed debate, and seeking to influence government policy.

SIGNIFICANT CHANGES

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the financial year.

OPERATING RESULT

The profit/(loss) from ordinary activities for the year after providing for movements in unexpected Project Funds was (\$16,055) - [2015: (\$313,160)].

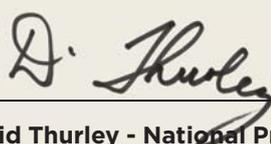
SURPLUS FUNDS

The incorporated association is prohibited under its rules from making any distribution of surplus funds to its members.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' BENEFITS

No committee member has received or become entitled to receive, during or since the end of financial year, a benefit because of a contract made by the incorporated association or a related body corporate with the committee member, a firm of which a committee member is a member or an entity in which a committee member has a substantial financial interest.

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the committee:



Cr David Thurley - National President



Cr Peter Jamieson - Treasurer

Dated: 07th October, 2016

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

PROFIT AND LOSS STATEMENT

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
INCOME			
Memberships	2	194,680	176,695
Operating Income	3	9,334	28,690
Activities	4	42,987	43,972
External Projects	5	7,731	89,290
Interest Received	6	1,732	3,519
Other Revenue	7	7,179	3,226
Profit On Sale of Non-Current Assets		-	2,967
Loss On Sale of Non-Current Assets		-	(1,158)
		263,643	347,201
LESS EXPENDITURE			
Administration Costs		-	916
Advertising		9,807	12,422
Activities, Conferences & Events		21,959	10,891
Bank Charges		527	1,117
Borrowing Expenses		629	-
Consultancy Fees		3,819	-
Contract Work		-	1,088
Computer Costs & Charges		4,550	5,344
Depreciation - Motor Vehicles		7,414	12,417
Depreciation - Office Furniture and Equipment		225	326
Depreciation - Low Value Pool		566	-
Donations		-	100
Electricity		-	1,905
Employees Entitlement	8	(23,093)	283
Entertainment Expenses		1,039	192
External Projects		-	250,699
Fines & Penalties		-	515
Fringe Benefits Tax		2,356	-
Insurance	9	6,814	2,638
Interest Paid		2,422	2,471
Legal Costs		560	-
Low Cost Asset (write off)		513	-
Meetings		4,376	-
Motor Vehicle Expenses - Car	10	4,989	8,892
Postage		1,300	5,531
Printing & Stationery		6,817	13,952
Professional Fees	11	13,636	66,621
Rates and Taxes	12	716	572
Rent		19,762	18,838
Repairs & Maintenance	13	209	2,744
Staff Training and Welfare		1,607	1,433
Subscriptions, Journals and Magazines		105	1,464
Superannuation Contributions		10,412	15,364
Telephone & Communications		7,792	12,278
Travel Expenses		6,614	22,350
Uniforms		73	-
Wages	14	161,183	184,505
Waste Disposal		-	2,493
		279,698	660,361
NET OPERATING PROFIT (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR		(16,055)	(313,160)
OTHER INCOME (EXPENSES) FOR THE YEAR		-	-
TOTAL PROFIT (LOSS) FOR THE YEAR		(16,055)	(313,160)

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

AS AT 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
ASSETS			
CURRENT ASSETS			
Cash on hand	15	89,602	220,827
Accounts receivable and other debtors	16	4,987	6,070
Other current assets	17	212	3,762
TOTAL CURRENT ASSETS		94,801	230,659
NON-CURRENT ASSETS			
Financial assets	18	166,600	144,050
Property, plant and equipment	19	30,746	35,954
TOTAL NON-CURRENT ASSETS		197,346	180,004
TOTAL ASSETS		292,147	410,663
LIABILITIES			
CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Accounts payable and other payables	20	32,286	61,107
Borrowings	21	3,308	3,308
Provisions	22	6,193	41,979
Other	23	44,241	100,336
TOTAL CURRENT LIABILITIES		86,028	206,730
NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES			
Borrowings	21	10,423	14,732
TOTAL NON-CURRENT LIABILITIES		10,423	14,732
TOTAL LIABILITIES		96,451	221,462
NET ASSETS		195,696	189,201
MEMBERS' FUNDS			
Reserves	24	61,673	39,123
Retained earnings		134,023	150,078
TOTAL MEMBERS' FUNDS		195,696	189,201

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

STATEMENT OF CHANGES IN EQUITY

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Retained Earnings \$	Asset Revaluation \$	Reserve Total \$
BALANCE AT 1 JULY 2014	463,238	-	463,238
COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Profit (loss) for the year	(313,160)	-	(313,160)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	(313,160)	-	(313,160)
OTHER	-	39,123	
TOTAL OTHER	-	39,123	39,123
BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2015	150,078	39,123	189,201
BALANCE AT 1 JULY 2015	150,078	39,123	189,201
COMPREHENSIVE INCOME			
Profit (loss) for the year	(16,055)	-	(16,056)
TOTAL COMPREHENSIVE INCOME FOR THE YEAR	(16,055)	-	(16,056)
OTHER			
REVALUATIONS	-	22,550	22,550
TOTAL OTHER	-	-	-
BALANCE AT 30 JUNE 2016	134,023	61,673	195,695

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

STATEMENT OF CASH FLOWS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

	Note	2016 \$	2015 \$
CASH FLOWS FROM OPERATING ACTIVITIES			
Grant Receipts		-	37,500
Other Receipts		293,198	580,673
Interest Received		1,732	3,099
Payments to Suppliers & Employees		(418,221)	(591,491)
Interest Paid		(629)	(2,471)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) OPERATING ACTIVITIES	28	(123,920)	27,310
CASH FLOWS FROM INVESTING ACTIVITIES			
Purchases of Property Plant & Equipment		(2,997)	(35,299)
Proceeds from Sale of Assets		-	38,182
NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) INVESTING ACTIVITIES		(2,997)	2,883
CASH FLOWS FROM FINANCING ACTIVITIES			
Additional Borrowings		-	14,118
Borrowing Repayments		(4,308)	(6,344)
NET CASH PROVIDED BY (USED IN) FINANCING ACTIVITIES		(4,308)	7,774
Net increase (decrease) in cash held		(131,225)	37,967
Cash on hand at beginning of financial year		220,827	182,860
Cash on hand at end of financial year	28	89,602	220,827

The accompanying notes form part of these financial statements.

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

NOTES TO THE FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

FOR THE YEAR ENDED 30 JUNE 2016

1 SUMMARY OF SIGNIFICANT ACCOUNTING POLICIES

This financial report is a special purpose financial report that has been prepared in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009 and the Associations Incorporation Regulation (NSW) 2010. The Board has determined that the not-for-profit Association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report covers Murray Darling Association Inc. as an individual entity. Murray Darling Association Inc. is a not-for-profit association incorporated in New South Wales under the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009 and the Associations Incorporation Regulation (NSW) 2010.

The financial report has been prepared on a going concern and accruals basis, and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets. The financial statements are presented in Australian dollars, which is also the Association's functional currency.

The following significant accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless stated otherwise, have been adopted in the preparation of these financial statements.

(a) Income Tax

No provision for income tax has been raised as the Association is exempt from income tax pursuant to Division 50, section 50-10 of the Income Tax Assessment Act 1997.

(b) Property, Plant and Equipment

Fixed Assets are carried at cost less, where applicable, any accumulated depreciation. The depreciable amount of all Fixed Assets is depreciated over the useful lives of the assets to the association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The carrying amount of plant and equipment is reviewed annually by the committee to ensure it is not in excess of the recoverable amount. The recoverable amount is assessed on the basis of expected net cash flows that will be received from the asset's employment and subsequent disposal. The expected net cash flows have been discounted to present values in determining recoverable amounts.

Depreciation

The depreciable amount of all fixed assets is depreciated on a diminishing-value basis over the asset's useful life to the Association commencing from the time the asset is held ready for use.

The assets' residual values and useful lives are reviewed, and adjusted if appropriate, at the end of each reporting period. An asset's carrying amount is written down immediately to its recoverable amount if the asset's carrying amount is greater than its estimated recoverable amount.

(c) Accounts Receivable and Other Debtors

Contractual receivables include accrued interest and other minor receivables. They are recognised at fair value.

(d) Employee Benefits

Provision is made for the association's liability for employee benefits arising from services rendered by employees to the end of the reporting period. Employee benefits have been measured at the nominal amounts expected to be paid when the liability is settled, plus any related on-costs. Both annual leave and long service leave are recognised within the provisions liability.

NOTES CONTINUED

Short-term employee benefits

Provision is made for the association's obligation for short-term employee benefits. Short-term employee benefits are benefits (other than termination benefits) that are expected to be settled wholly before 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service, including wages, salaries and sick leave. Short-term employee benefits are measured at the (undiscounted) amounts expected to be paid when the obligation is settled.

The association's obligations for short-term employee benefits such as wages, salaries and sick leave are recognised as a part of current trade and other payables in the statement of financial position.

Other long-term employee benefits

Provision is made for employees' long service leave and annual leave entitlements not expected to be settled wholly within 12 months after the end of the annual reporting period in which the employees render the related service. Other long-term employee benefits are measured at the present value of the expected future payments to be made to employees. Expected future payments incorporate anticipated future wage and salary levels, durations of service and employee departures and are discounted at rates determined by reference to market yields at the end of the reporting period on government bonds that have maturity dates that approximate the terms of the obligations. Upon the re-measurement of obligations for other long-term employee benefits, the net change in the obligation is recognised in profit or loss as a part of employee benefits expense.

The association's obligations for long-term employee benefits are presented as non-current provisions in its statement of financial position, except where the association does not have an unconditional right to defer settlement for at least 12 months after the end of the reporting period, in which case the obligations are presented as current provisions.

(e) Cash and Cash Equivalents

Cash and cash equivalents includes cash on hand and at banks.

(f) Revenue and Other Income

Membership, Grants, Project, Activities & Interest revenue are recognised when received.

Donations and bequests are recognised in accordance with Accounting Standard AASB 1004 Contributions, which occurs when all of the following three conditions are satisfied: -

- (a) the entity gains control of the contribution or the right to receive the contribution; and
- (b) it is probable that the economic benefits comprising the contribution will flow to the entity; and
- (c) the amount of the contribution can be measured reliably.

All revenue is stated net of the amount of goods and services tax.

(g) Accounts Payable and Other Payables

Contractual payables arise when the association becomes obliged to make future payments in respect of the purchase of goods and services. They are initially recognised at fair value, and then subsequently carried at amortised cost.

NOTES CONTINUED

(h) Goods and Services Tax (GST)

Revenues, expenses and assets are recognised net of the amount of GST, except where the amount of GST incurred is not recoverable from the Australian Taxation Office (ATO).

Receivables and payables are stated inclusive of the amount of GST receivable or payable. The net amount of GST recoverable from, or payable to, the ATO is included with other receivables or payables in the statement of financial position.

(i) Restatement of Comparative Figures

Where necessary, comparative figures have been reclassified and repositioned for consistency with current year disclosures. The 2015 comparatives have been adjusted to reflect the restatement of the revaluation of High Security Water Shares. The adjustments have been made to more accurately present these balances in accordance with AASB 101 Presentation of Financial Statements.

The effects of this restatement are as follows:

	As previously reported \$	As presented \$	Effect of restatement \$
Profit and Loss Statement			
Operating Income	67,813	28,690	(39,123)
Total Profit (Loss) for the Year	(274,037)	(313,160)	(39,123)
Equity			
Reserves	-	39,123	39,123

(j) Murray Darling Foundation

The Murray Darling Foundation was established by the Murray Darling Association Inc. as a 'Gift Fund' to receive tax deductible donations. The principal activity of the Foundation is to support the objectives of the Murray Darling Association Inc. The Foundation may receive gifts of money or property which are eligible tax deductible donations under item 6.1.1 of sub-section 30-55(1) of the Income Tax Assessment 1997.

The foundation is not currently operational. The board resolved to suspend its activities pending a review of its purpose and the formation of a new committee.

(k) Leases

Leases of Fixed Assets, where substantially all the risks and benefits incidental to the ownership of the asset (but not the legal ownership) are transferred to the association, are classified as finance leases.

Finance lease are capitalized by recording an asset and a liability at the lower of the amounts equal to the fair value of the leased property or the present value of the minimum lease payments, including any guaranteed residual values. Lease payments are allocated between the reduction of the lease liability and the lease interest expense for that period.

Leased assets are depreciated on a diminishing value basis over the shorter of their estimated useful lives or the lease term. Lease payments for operating leases, where substantially all the risks and benefits remain with the lessor, are charged as expenses in the periods in which they are incurred.

NOTES CONTINUED

	2016 \$	2015 \$
2 MEMBERSHIPS:		
Memberships	194,680	176,695
3 OPERATING INCOME:		
Donations & Sponsorships	34	5,417
Project Labour Costs	1,641	-
Fundraising Events	7,659	6,634
Late Fees Collected	-	2,460
Product Sales	-	900
Water Sales	-	5,965
Copyright Licensing Fees	-	7,314
	9,334	28,690
4 ACTIVITIES:		
Conferences & Forums	42,987	43,972
5 EXTERNAL PROJECTS:		
Project Contributions	7,731	89,290
6 INTEREST RECEIVED:		
Bank	1,732	3,519
7 OTHER REVENUE:		
Proceeds from Insurance Policies	1,048	-
ATO Reimbursement	6,066	-
Expense Reimbursement	65	3,226
	7,179	3,226
8 EMPLOYEES ENTITLEMENT:		
Annual Leave	(8,171)	3,561
Long Service Leave	(14,922)	(3,278)
	(23,093)	283
9 INSURANCE:		
General	2,686	1,656
WorkCover	4,128	982
	6,814	2,638

NOTES CONTINUED

	2016 \$	2015 \$
10 MOTOR VEHICLE EXPENSES - CAR:		
Petrol & Oil	2,721	3,893
Registration & Insurance	1,750	2,952
Repairs & Maintenance	518	2,047
	<u>4,989</u>	<u>8,892</u>
11 PROFESSIONAL FEES:		
Accounting Fees	1,950	66,621
Audit Fees	11,686	-
	<u>13,636</u>	<u>66,621</u>
12 RATES AND TAXES:		
Water	716	572
13 REPAIRS & MAINTENANCE:		
Plant & Equipment	209	2,744
14 WAGES:		
Permanent	161,183	184,505
15 CASH ON HAND		
Petty Cash	200	16
Cash at Bank	89,402	220,811
	<u>89,602</u>	<u>220,827</u>
16 ACCOUNTS RECEIVABLE AND OTHER DEBTORS		
CURRENT		
Trade Debtors	-	2,400
Good & Services Tax	4,987	3,670
	<u>4,987</u>	<u>6,070</u>
17 OTHER CURRENT ASSETS		
CURRENT		
Accrued Income	212	402
Prepayments	-	3,360
	<u>212</u>	<u>3,762</u>

NOTES CONTINUED

	2016 \$	2015 \$
18 FINANCIAL ASSETS		
NON-CURRENT		
Available-for-sale financial assets	(a) 166,600	144,050
(a) Available-for-sale financial assets:		
Investments:		
High Security Water Shares	166,600	144,050
19 PROPERTY, PLANT AND EQUIPMENT		
Motor Vehicles	34,718	34,718
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(12,478)	(5,064)
	22,240	29,654
Office Furniture & Equipment	7,622	5,804
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(5,311)	(5,086)
	2,311	718
Low Value Pool	1,761	582
Less Accumulated Depreciation	(566)	-
	1,195	582
Artwork	5,000	5,000
Total property, plant and equipment	30,746	35,954
20 ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AND OTHER PAYABLES		
CURRENT		
Sundry Creditors	3,390	1,078
Trade Creditors	5,929	14,038
Other Creditors	21,543	42,589
Tax Payable	1,424	3,402
	32,286	61,107
21 BORROWINGS		
CURRENT		
Hire Purchase Liability	3,998	3,998
Less Unexpired Hire Purchase Liability	(690)	(690)
	3,308	3,308
NON-CURRENT		
Debenture Loans	4,500	5,500
Hire Purchase Liability	5,997	9,996
Less Unexpired Hire Purchase Liability	(74)	(764)
	5,923	9,232
	10,423	14,732

NOTES CONTINUED

	2016 \$	2015 \$
22 PROVISIONS		
CURRENT		
Provision for Annual Leave	4,198	12,369
Provision for Long Service Leave	-	14,922
Superannuation Liability	1,995	14,688
	<u>6,193</u>	<u>41,979</u>
Provision for Annual Leave:		
Opening balance at 1 July 2015	12,369	
Additional Provisions Raised	8,027	
Amounts Taken	(16,199)	
Balance at 30 June 2016	<u>4,198</u>	
Provision for Long Service Leave:		
Opening balance at 1 July 2015	14,922	
Amounts Taken	(14,922)	
Balance at 30 June 2016	<u>-</u>	
Total Provisions		
Opening balance at 1 July 2015	27,292	
Additional Provisions Raised	8,027	
Amounts Taken	(31,121)	
Superannuation Liability	1,995	
Balance at 30 June 2016	<u>6,193</u>	
23 OTHER LIABILITIES		
CURRENT		
Accrued Charges	8,231	100,336
Income in Advance	36,010	-
	<u>44,241</u>	<u>100,336</u>

24 RESERVES

Asset Revaluation Reserve

The asset revaluation reserve records revaluations of non-current assets. Under certain circumstances dividends can be declared from this reserve.

25 CAPITAL COMMITMENTS

There are no Commitments as at 30 June 2016 (2015: \$nil).

NOTES CONTINUED

26 CONTINGENT LIABILITIES AND CONTINGENT ASSETS

There are no Contingent Liabilities at 30 June 2016 (2015: \$nil). There are no Contingent Assets at 30 June 2016 (2015: \$nil).

27 EVENTS AFTER THE REPORTING PERIOD

Since 30 June 2016, there have been no events that would materially affect the Financial Statements at Balance Date.

28 CASH FLOW INFORMATION

	2016 \$	2015 \$
Reconciliation of Cash		
(a) Cash on hand at the end of financial year as included in the statement of cash flows is reconciled to the related items in the statement of financial position as follows:		
Cash	200	16
Cash at Bank	89,402	220,811
	<u>89,602</u>	<u>220,827</u>
(b) Reconciliation of cash flow from operating activities with net current year profit		
Current year profit after income tax	(16,055)	(313,160)
Cash flows excluded from current year profit:		
Depreciation Expense	8,205	12,743
Impairment Loss/(Gain) on Fixed Assets	-	(1,810)
(Profit)/Loss on Sale of Assets	-	(39,123)
Changes in assets and liabilities:		
(Increase)/Decrease in Receivables	4,633	207,791
(Increase)/Decrease in Prepayments	-	(3,360)
Increase/(Decrease) in Payables	(84,917)	124,823
Increase/(Decrease) in Provisions	(35,786)	39,406
Net cash provided by (used in) operating activities	<u>(123,920)</u>	<u>27,310</u>

MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC.

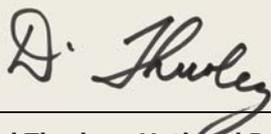
STATEMENT BY MEMBERS OF THE COMMITTEE

The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity and that this special purpose financial report should be prepared in accordance with the accounting policies outlined in Note 1 to the financial statements.

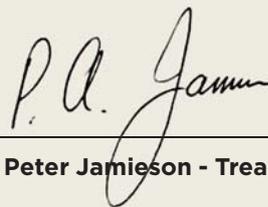
In accordance with a resolution of the committee of Murray Darling Association Inc., the members of the committee declare that the financial statements as set out on pages 4 to 18:

1. present a true and fair view of the financial position of Murray Darling Association Inc. as at 30 June 2016 and its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1 to the financial statements and the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009 and Associations Incorporation Regulation (NSW) 2010; and
2. at the date of this statement there are reasonable grounds to believe that Murray Darling Association Inc. will be able to pay its debts as and when they fall due.

This statement is signed for and on behalf of the committee by:



Cr David Thurley - National President



Cr Peter Jamieson - Treasurer

Dated: 7th October, 2016

**INDEPENDENT AUDITOR'S REPORT
TO THE MEMBERS OF
MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INC**

Report on the Financial Report

We have audited the accompanying financial report, being a special purpose financial report, of Murray Darling Association Inc, which comprises the balance sheet as at 30 June 2016, and the statement of comprehensive income, statement of changes in equity and statement of cash flows for the year then ended, a summary of significant accounting policies, other explanatory notes and the statement by members of the board.

Committee's Responsibility for the Financial Report

The committee of the Murray Darling Association Inc are responsible for the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and have determined that the basis of preparation described in Note 1 to the financial report, is appropriate to meet the requirements of the *Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009* and are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. The committee's responsibility also includes establishing and maintaining internal controls to enable the preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view and is free from material misstatement, whether due to fraud or error; selecting and applying appropriate accounting policies; and making accounting estimates that are reasonable in the circumstances.

Auditor's Responsibility

Our responsibility is to express an opinion on the financial report based on our audit. No opinion is expressed as to whether the accounting policies used, as described in Note 1, are appropriate to meet the needs of the members. We conducted our audit in accordance with Australian Auditing Standards. These Auditing Standards require that we comply with relevant ethical requirements relating to audit engagements and plan and perform the audit to obtain reasonable assurance whether the financial report is free from material misstatement.

An audit involves performing procedures to obtain audit evidence about the amounts and disclosures in the financial report. The procedures selected depend on the auditor's judgment, including the assessment of the risks of material misstatement of the financial report, whether due to fraud or error. In making those risk assessments, the auditor considers internal control relevant to the entity's preparation of the financial report that gives a true and fair view in order to design audit procedures that are appropriate in the circumstances, but not for the purpose of expressing an opinion on the effectiveness of the entity's internal control. An audit also includes evaluating the appropriateness of accounting policies used and the reasonableness of accounting estimates made by the committee, as well as evaluating the overall presentation of the financial report.

The financial report has been prepared for distribution to members for the purpose of fulfilling the committee's financial reporting under the *Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009*. We disclaim any assumption of responsibility for any reliance on this report or on the financial report to which it relates to any person other than the members, or for any purpose other than that for which it was prepared.

We believe that the audit evidence we have obtained is sufficient and appropriate to provide a basis for our audit opinion.

Independence

In conducting our audit, we have complied with the independence requirements of the Australian professional ethical pronouncements.

Auditor's Opinion

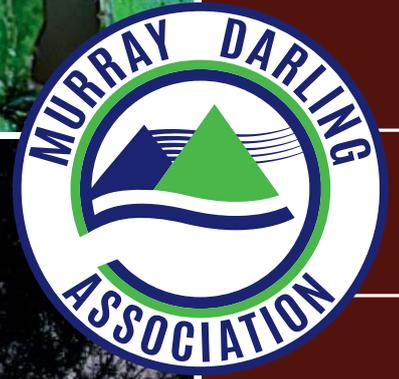
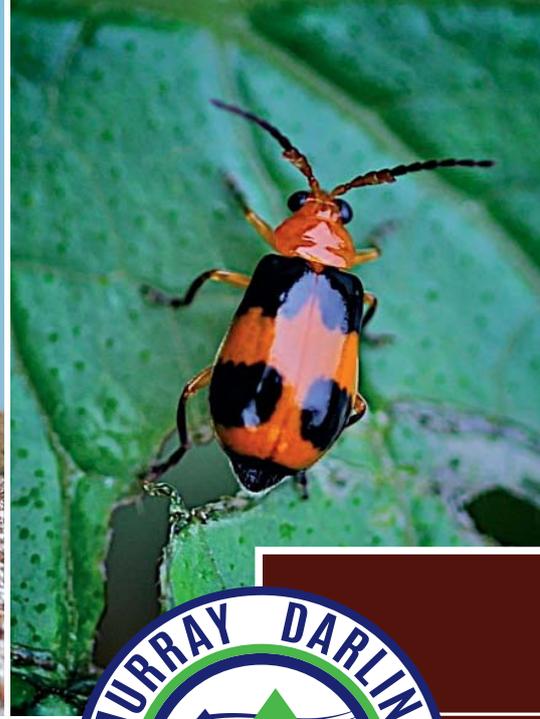
In our opinion, the financial report of Murray Darling Association Inc is in accordance with the *Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009*, including:

- a. giving a true and fair view of the association's financial position as at 30 June 2016 and of its performance for the year ended on that date in accordance with the accounting policies described in Note 1; and
- b. complying with Australian Accounting Standards to the extent described in Note 1 and complying with the *Associations Incorporation Act (NSW) 2009*.

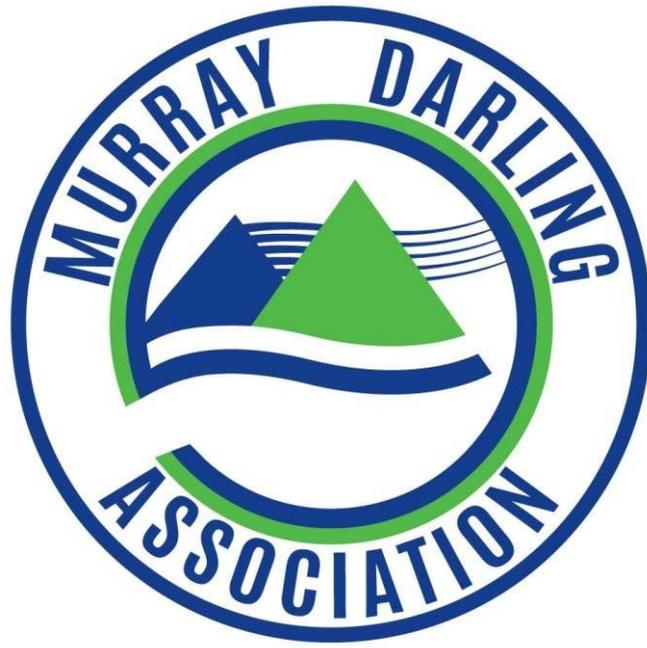


Warren Pollock
MGR ACCOUNTANTS
mgr@mgr.com.au

10 October 2016



Local Government: Voice of the Basin



It's in the Balance

Murray Darling Association Inc.

An incorporated association under the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* (NSW)

CONSTITUTION

OCTOBER 2016

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Constitution

Part 1 – Preamble

1. *Origins and Background*

The Murray Darling Association Incorporated is the name adopted for the organisation named “Murray Valley League for Development and Conservation Incorporated” (1979) which itself derived from the “Murray Valley Development League” which was established by resolution of the Yarrowonga Conference (August 1944) and the South Australian Regions at the Murray Bridge Conference (December 1944).

2. *Vision*

The MDA works to achieve a healthy and environmentally balanced Basin river system that supports thriving communities, economic development and sustainable productivity

3. *Purpose*

To provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by:

- (1) providing information;
- (2) facilitating debate; and
- (3) seeking to influence government policy.

4. *Objectives*

The objectives of the MDA are to:

- (1) advocate on behalf of Basin communities;
- (2) use local knowledge and expertise to fully understand regional issues;
- (3) act as a two-way conduit for information and discussion between our communities and governments;
- (4) encourage and facilitate debate about relevant issues that matter for the Basin’s future;
- (5) explore options to achieve sound solutions to regional issues;
- (6) test information to ensure a sound base for those options;
- (7) be an educational resource for the Basin.

Part 2 – Definitions

5. **Definitions**

(1) In this Constitution:

Act means the *Associations Incorporation Act 2009* (NSW).

Basin means the Murray-Darling Basin.

Board means the governing body of MDA and which is the committee for the purposes of the Act.

Board Meeting means a meeting of the Board of the MDA.

CEO means the chief executive officer of the MDA.

Constitution means this constitution as amended from time to time.

Code means a code prepared and adopted by the Board in respect of MDA processes, membership, conduct or like matters.

Delegate means a person who may attend, represent and vote an MDA Meeting, including:

- (i) a Member Council Delegate; or
- (ii) a Region Delegate; or
- (ii) a Life Member.

Individual Member means a person accepted as a Member.

Life Member means a Member appointed as a Life Member as described in this Constitution.

MDA means the association incorporated under the Act known as “Murray Darling Association Inc”.

MDA Meeting means a general meeting, special general meeting or the annual general meeting of the MDA.

Member means a financial member for the time being of the MDA and includes:

- (i) Member Council;
- (iii) Organisation Member;
- (iii) Individual Member;
- (iv) Life Member.

Member Council means a local government municipal or entity which has satisfied and maintains the requirements for membership of the MDA.

Organisation means a company, corporation, association, body corporate, partnership, government or statutory authority, community service or not for profit organisation or other legal body (other than a Member Council).

Organisation Member means an Organisation accepted as a Member.

Proxy means the authority to represent and act on behalf of a Delegate or Representative.

Region Meeting means a meeting of Members located in a Region.

Public Officer means the person holding office under this Constitution as the public officer of the MDA.

Region means an area made up of particular local government municipalities so determined, from time to time in accordance with this Constitution.

Region Executive means the managing executive of the Region as detailed in this Constitution.

Regulation means the *Associations Incorporation Regulation 2010* (NSW).

Representative means a person who may attend, represent and vote on behalf of a Member Council or Member Organisation at a Region Meeting, including a Representative who is:

- (i) a Member Council Representative;
- (ii) an Organisation Representative.

Special Resolution means a vote of 75% of:

- (i) Delegates at a MDA Meeting; or
- (ii) Representatives and Members at a Region Meeting.

(2) In this Constitution:

- (a) a reference to a function includes a reference to a power, authority and duty;
- (b) a reference to the exercise of a function includes, if the function is a duty, a reference to the performance of the duty
- (c) a reference to a person includes a natural person (individual), company, corporation, body corporate or other body (whether or not the body is incorporated)
- (d) a reference to an authority, institution, association or body ("**original entity**") that has ceased to exist, been reconstituted, renamed or replaced or whose powers or functions have been transferred to another entity, is a reference to the entity that most closely serves the purposes or objects of the original entity.

(3) The provisions of the *Interpretation Act 1987* (NSW) apply to and in respect of this Constitution in the same manner as those provisions would so apply if this Constitution were an instrument made under the Act.

Part 3 – Membership Categories

6. *Membership categories and rights*

- (1) The table below sets out the categories which comprise the membership of MDA, together with particular qualifications and the rights associated with each category.

Category	Category qualification	Category rights for Region Meeting	Category rights for MDA Meeting
Member Council	Local government entity, located within a Region, which is a current Member.	To appoint 2 Representatives, plus an additional Representative for every 20,000 of population (or part thereof) of the municipality above the first 20,000, up to a further 3, for a maximum total of 5 Representatives. To have its representatives attend, participate and vote on its behalf at a Region meeting.	To appoint 1 Member Council Delegate, plus an additional Delegate for every 20,000 (or part thereof) of population of the municipality above the first 20,000, up to a further 2, for a maximum total of 3 Member Council Delegates.
Organisation Member	An Organisation, located within a Region, which is a current Member.	To appoint a Representative for a Region Meeting. To have its Representative <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attend, participate and vote on its behalf at a Region Meeting; • to be eligible for election by a Region as a Region Delegate. 	Its Representative may attend and participate at an MDA Meeting. If its' Representative is elected as a Region Delegate, to vote as a Region Delegate at the MDA Meeting.
Life Member	As identified in this Constitution or elected as a Life Member.	To attend, participate and vote at a Region Meeting.	To attend, participate and vote at an MDA Meeting as a Life Member.
Individual Member	A person living in a Region who is a current Member.	To attend, participate and vote at a Region Meeting. To be eligible for election as a Region Delegate.	To attend and participate at an MDA Meeting. If elected as a Region Delegate, to vote as the Region Delegate at an MDA Meeting.

- (2) A person or legal entity is eligible to be a Member of the MDA if:
- (a) the person or legal entity meets the category and qualifications set out in the table to sub clause (1) or otherwise in the Constitution for the category of membership sought, and
 - (b) the person or legal entity applies for membership in accordance with clause 21.

- (3) A person or legal entity is a Member if:
- (a) they or it is an existing Member of the MDA at the date of adoption of this Constitution; or
 - (b) is accepted by the Board as a Member as contemplated in clause 21; and
 - (c) their or its Membership has not ended.
- (4) The Region within which the Member's rights apply is:
- (a) for a Member Council, the Region it is located in;
 - (b) for an Individual Member or a Life Member, the Region the Member resides in;
 - (c) for an Organisation Member, the Region the Organisation is located in or if in more than one region, the organization may select its region.
- (5) A Member will retain all rights in relation to the relevant membership category unless or until:
- (a) a Member resigns as a Member;
 - (b) subject to clause 15(c), the membership is suspended or ended at the direction of the Board;
 - (c) in the case of a Member Council such membership may only be suspended or ended by a vote at a MDA Meeting;
 - (d) in a case of an Individual Member or an Organisation Member, membership rights will be suspended at any time the Individual Member or Organisation Member's annual fee is overdue by more than 90 days;
 - (e) if elected as a councillor of a Member Council any Individual Members membership is suspended, whilst the person remains a councillor;
 - (f) if an Organisation Representative is elected as a councillor of a Member Council, then whilst that person is a councillor, the Organisation must nominate an alternative Organisation Representative, otherwise the Organisation Member's membership is suspended.
- (6) A serving councillor of a Member Council or a member of a Member organisation must not:
- (a) apply to become an Individual Member; or
 - (b) allow an Organisation to apply for membership with that councillor proposed as the Organisation Representative.
- (7) In respect of Life Members:
- (a) the current Life Members of the MDA are those set out in Schedule 1;
 - (b) the process and regulation in relation to Life Members will be subject to any Code prepared by the Board and adopted at a MDA Meeting.

Part 4 - The Board

7. ***Powers of the Board***

Subject to the Act, the Regulation and this Constitution and to any resolution passed by the MDA, the Board:

- (a) is to control and manage the affairs of the MDA, and
- (b) may exercise all such functions as may be exercised by the MDA, other than those functions that are required by this Constitution to be exercised by a MDA Meeting, and
- (c) has power to perform all such acts and do all such things as appear to the Board to be necessary or desirable for the proper management of the affairs of the MDA, and
- (d) has the power to make policies or Codes for the proper conduct of the MDA which will be binding on Members to the extent not inconsistent with this Constitution.

Without limiting the above, the Board may, without the need for any further resolutions to be passed at a MDA Meeting:

- (e) provide, monitor and manage good governance processes;
- (f) carry out a direction from a MDA Meeting;
- (g) prepare, manage and monitor an annual budget;
- (h) take steps to obtain the necessary resources for the MDA to continue its role;
- (i) appoint, manage and if required dismiss any of a chief executive officer, Public Officer and auditor;
- (j) monitor and review the organisation's performance;
- (k) appoint any sub-committee to address issues and carry out activities on behalf of the Board;
- (l) appoint staff to address issues and carry out activities on behalf of the Board.

8. ***Composition of the Board***

- (1) The Board will comprise each of the chairs of the Regions of the MDA existing from time to time.
- (2) On an annual basis, at a Board Meeting, the Board will elect:
 - (a) a President;
 - (b) a Vice President; and
 - (c) a Treasurer (as provided in clause 8(3));to serve for the financial year.
- (3) The Board must appoint a Treasurer of the Board. The Treasurer:
 - (a) must have, in the reasonable opinion of the Board, appropriate qualifications in accounting or a like field or otherwise have sound financial expertise;
 - (b) may be a Board member, an Individual Member or an Organisation Representative; and

- (c) if the Treasurer is not a Board member, the Treasurer will attend Board Meetings upon request of the Board.

9. Public officer

- (1) The Public Officer of the MDA must, as soon as practicable after being appointed as Public Officer, lodge notice with the MDA of his or her address. The Public Officer may be the Chief Executive Officer.
- (2) It is the duty of the Public Officer to ensure that minutes are kept of:
 - (a) all appointments of office-bearers and Board members and its sub- committees, and
 - (b) the names of the Board members present at a Board Meeting or a MDA Meeting, and
 - (c) all proceedings at Board Meetings, sub-committee meetings and MDA Meetings.
- (3) Minutes of proceedings at a Board Meeting must be signed by the President as chairperson of the meeting or by the chairperson of the next succeeding meeting.
- (4) It is the duty of the Public Officer to ensure:
 - (a) that all money due to the MDA is collected and received and that all payments authorised by the MDA are made, and
 - (b) that correct books and accounts are kept showing the financial affairs of the MDA, including full details of all receipts and expenditure connected with the activities of the MDA.

10. Casual vacancies

- (1) A casual vacancy in the office of a Board member occurs if the Board member:
 - (a) dies, or
 - (b) resigns or otherwise ceases his or her position or involvement with the Member he or she was elected to represent, or
 - (c) becomes an insolvent under administration within the meaning of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth, or
 - (d) resigns office by notice in writing given to the Public Officer, or
 - (e) becomes a mentally incapacitated person, or
 - (f) is absent without the consent of the Board from 3 consecutive meetings of the Board, or
 - (g) is convicted of an offence involving fraud or dishonesty for which the maximum penalty on conviction is imprisonment for not less than 3 months or other indictable offence, or
 - (h) is prohibited from being a director of a company under Part 2D.6 (Disqualification from managing corporations) of the *Corporations Act 2001* of the Commonwealth, or
 - (i) is prohibited from being a responsible person of a registered charity under the *Australian Charities and Not-for-profits Commission Act 2012*, or
 - (j) is removed as provided in clause 11.

- (2) Upon ceasing to be a Board member the person will also cease to be a chair of the particular Region.
- (3) In the event of a vacancy occurring in the membership of the Board, the Region may appoint a new Chair to the Region to fill the vacancy and until such time the Board will continue its activities minus that Board member.

11. Removal of Board members

- (1) A Board Meeting may, by an ordinary resolution, remove any Board member from that office before the ending of the person's term of office, provided:
 - (a) the Board (by its vote) forms the view (on proper and reasonable grounds) that the relevant Board member has acted in a manner which is substantially prejudicial to the interests of the MDA; or
 - (b) the Board member has committed a serious breach of any Code of conduct for Board, or MDA Members, adopted by the Board.
- (2) A Board Member who is removed under clause 11 (1) shall have the right of appeal. That appeal shall be addressed to the public officer and be acted upon as per clause 27 of this constitution.
- (3) A Board Member who is exercising their right of appeal in 11 (2) (a), shall be suspended from all Board responsibilities until the resolution of that appeal.

12. Board member vacancy

- (1) Upon the occurrence of a casual vacancy under clause 10 or removal of a Board member under clause 11:
 - (a) the relevant former Board member ceases to be the chair of and (if applicable) a Region Delegate on behalf of the relevant Region;
 - (b) the resulting Region vacancy must be filled by the Region as soon as practicable;
 - (c) prior to any re-appointment the Board may continue to operate otherwise in accord with the Constitution.

13. Board meetings and quorum

- (1) The Board must hold at least 8 meetings (at least 2 of which must be face to face) in each period of 12 months, at such place and time as the Board may determine.
- (2) A Board Meeting may be held with use of technology that allows a Board member using the technology and the Board members present at the meeting to clearly and simultaneously communicate with each other. A Board member in attendance using that technology will be deemed to be physically present at the meeting.
- (3) Additional (including emergency) meetings of the Board may be convened by the President (or the Vice President, in the President's absence) as considered necessary or upon the request of 3 Board members.
- (4) Written notice of a meeting of the Board must be given by the CEO or Public Officer to each member of the Board at least 14 days (or such other period as may be unanimously agreed on by the members of the Board) before the time appointed for the holding of the meeting.
- (5) Notice of a meeting given under sub clause (4) must specify the general nature of the business to be transacted at the meeting and no business other than that

business is to be transacted at the meeting, except business which the Board members present at the meeting by a majority agree to consider.

- (6) The need for 14 days' notice of a Board Meeting will not apply in the case of an emergency, provided:
 - (a) 48 hours' notice will be sufficient;
 - (b) such notice must be in writing and attempted orally with the first oral attempt more than 48 hours before the meeting, acknowledging subsequent oral attempts may occur within 48 hours;
 - (c) the only business that may be transacted at the emergency meeting is the item or items that constituted the emergency as disclosed in the notice;
 - (d) the emergency meeting by a vote of a majority present, must confirm that issue or issues for consideration did constitute an emergency for the meeting and any resolutions from it to be effective.
- (7) A quorum for a Board Meeting will be one more than half of the chairs then appointed by the Regions. (For example if only 10 Regions have a chair, then 6 present will be the quorum.)
- (8) No business is to be transacted by the Board unless a quorum is present and if, within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, a quorum is not present, the meeting is to stand adjourned to the same place and at the same hour of the same day in the following week.
- (9) If at the adjourned meeting a quorum is not present within half an hour of the time appointed for the meeting, the meeting will not proceed.
- (10) At a meeting of the Board:
 - (a) the President or, in the President's absence, the Vice President is to preside, or
 - (b) if the President and the Vice President are absent or unwilling to act, such one of the remaining Board members as may be chosen by the Board members present at the meeting is to preside;
 - (c) all voting shall be by ordinary resolution of the majority of the Board members present (there will be no proxy voting);
 - (d) if there is a tie in any vote, the chair of the Board Meeting may exercise an additional casting vote.

14. Sub-committees and delegation

- (1) The Board may establish sub-committees consisting of such Members Organisation Nominees, Member Council Nominees or non-members of the MDA as the Board thinks fit. Each sub-committee may be a standing or ad-hoc committee reporting to or advising the Board.
- (2) The Board may, by instrument in writing, delegate to a sub-committee or Chief Executive Officer the exercise of such of the functions of the Board as are specified in the instrument, other than:
 - (a) this power of delegation, and
 - (b) a function which is a duty imposed on the Board by the Constitution, the Act or by any other law.
- (3) A Region Executive is a sub-committee of the Board of the MDA.

- (4) A function the exercise of which has been delegated to a sub-committee under this clause may, while the delegation remains unrevoked, be exercised from time to time by the sub-committee in accordance with the terms of the delegation.
- (5) A delegation under this clause may be made subject to such conditions or limitations as to the exercise of any function, or as to time or circumstances, as may be specified in the instrument of delegation.
- (6) Despite any delegation under this clause, the Board may continue to exercise any function delegated.
- (7) Any act or thing done or suffered by a sub-committee acting in the exercise of a delegation under this clause has the same force and effect as it would have if it had been done or suffered by the Board.
- (8) The Board may, by instrument in writing, revoke wholly or in part any delegation under this clause.
- (9) The Board may determine a sub-committee's terms of reference, and the sub-committee must comply with any other requirements set out in its terms of reference. The terms of reference may entitle the President or the Vice-President to be an ex-officio member or observer of the sub-committee. The sub-committee may otherwise meet and adjourn as it thinks proper.

Part 5 - Regions

15. Role and Region composition

- (1) The role of the Region includes:
 - (a) initiating action on Region issues within the bounds of the MDA policy and any Codes;
 - (b) encouraging support for the MDA and its policies and actions;
 - (c) initiating and facilitating discussion on Region and Basin issues;
 - (d) increasing awareness of an education in respect of the MDA and the Basin;
 - (e) recommending changes to policy to the Board or the MDA;
 - (f) encouraging financial support for the MDA;
 - (g) appointing Region Delegates to a MDA Meeting.
- (2) The Regions of the MDA shall be made up of those local government municipal areas determined and as amended from time to time, by resolution of the Board.
- (3) The details of the areas making up each Region must be maintained by the Board and made available to Members on request and published (and kept up to date) on the MDA website.
- (4) The composition of a Region and the number of Regions may be varied from time to time by the resolution of the Board, the listed Regions and their composition. Variations to the composition of the Regions may be proposed by the Regions, the Board, or the vote of an MDA Meeting.
- (5) Within each Region the Members in respect of that Region will be:
 - (a) Member Councils within the Region;
 - (b) Organisation Members located in the Region, provided if the Organisation is located in multiple Regions it must nominate one Region;
 - (c) Life Members and Individual Members, resident within that Region.

16. Region Meetings

- (1) In respect of a Region:
 - (a) a Member Council may appoint:
 - (i) 2 Member Council Representatives; plus
 - (ii) 1 or more additional Member Council Representatives, for each 20,000 of population (or part thereof) above the first 20,000;up to a maximum of 5 Member Council Representatives. A Member Council Representative may be a councillor or council officer of the Member Council, or another person selected and supported by the Member Council;
 - (b) an Organisation may appoint 1 Organisation Member Representative.
- (2) Region Meetings may be attended by:
 - (a) Member Council Representatives;
 - (b) Organisation Member Representatives;
 - (c) Individual Members;

- (d) Life Members;
 - (e) people from other Regions in various capacities
 - (f) guest speakers and other invitees and subject to the management of the meeting by the Chair, may address the meeting.
- (3) Region Meetings:
- (a) must occur at least 4 times per year;
 - (b) may be called by the Region Executive, Chair of the Region Executive or not less than 2 Member Councils within the Region and
 - (c) require written notice of not less than 14 days to all Members located within the Region.
- (4) Regions must elect annually at a Region Meeting a Region Executive made up of:
- (a) a chair; plus
 - (b) not less than 2 and not more than 5, other Region Executive Members.
- (5) The chair of the Region Executive is the chair of the Region, provided further:
- (a) the chair must demonstrate both the initial and ongoing capacity to provide secretariat support for the activities of the Region;
 - (b) when the position of the chair becomes vacant for any reason, the Region Executive may appoint a temporary chair and a new chair must be appointed at the next Region Meeting;
 - (c) the chair must ensure minutes and other necessary records of Region Executive and Region Meetings are taken, kept and provided regularly to the MDA Board.
- (6) Voting at a Region Meeting must occur as follows:
- (a) Member Council Representatives may vote through a proxy provided:
 - (i) not less than one Member Council Representative appointed by the same Member Council, is present; and
 - (ii) the relevant proxy has been given, in writing, to that Member Council Representative who is present;
 - (b) one vote for each Individual Member of that Region and Life Member of that Region present;
 - (c) one vote for each Organisation Member of that Region, through its Organisation Member Representative, who must be present;
 - (d) a quorum of the Region Meeting will be not less than $\frac{1}{3}$ of Member Councils present in the Region;
 - (e) voting will be by ordinary majority;
 - (f) the chair will have an additional casting vote in the case of a tie in votes.
- (7) The Region Executive shall have responsibility to facilitate and implement the various roles of the Region and may if it considers appropriate seek support from Members to provide assistance including involvement through sub-committees as is thought fit.
- (8) The Region shall provide a report not less than once a year and prior to the annual general meeting of the MDA, of various business and actions dealt with by and within the Region relevant to the MDA.

- (9) Regions are encouraged to hold joint meetings with nearby Regions or Regions with common interests to discuss matters of common interest.
- (10) Each year prior to the 30th of June at a Region Meeting, the Region will elect by a vote, up to 3 Regional Delegates to attend and vote at any MDA Meeting occurring over the following 12-month period (to the next 30 June). A Region Delegate must not be a Member Council
- (11) To be effective, details of the elected Region Delegates must be sent (together with the minutes of the relevant meeting) to the Board of the MDA, addressed to the President or the Chief Executive Officer not less than 14 days prior to the next MDA Meeting.

Part 6 – MDA Meetings

17. *MDA Meetings*

- (1) In respect of an MDA Meeting:
 - (a) a Member Council may appoint:
 - (i) 1 Member Council Delegates; plus
 - (ii) 1 additional Member Council Delegate, for every 20,000 of population (or part thereof) above the first 20,000;

up to a maximum of 3 Member Council Delegates. A Member Council Delegate may be a councillor or council officer of the Member Council, or another person selected and supported by the Member Council;
 - (b) an Organisation may appoint 1 Organisation Member Delegate.
- (2) The MDA must hold an MDA Meeting at least once every financial year and one of those MDA Meetings must be the annual general meeting.
- (3) The annual general meeting of the MDA must be held between 1 July and 30 November in a particular year.
- (4) The time, place and arrangements for the annual general meeting of the MDA will be set by the MDA at any preceding MDA Meeting, failing which the Board will make arrangements for the annual general meeting.
- (5) The Board or not less than 4 Member Councils, may call a general meeting or a special general meeting of the MDA, by:
 - (a) written notice of the request to the Chief Executive Officer; and
 - (b) process as set out in paragraph (5).
- (6) Any MDA Meeting, must be as follows:
 - (a) arranged by the Board, including through the Chief Executive Officer or Public Officer;
 - (b) by sending by post or email a written notice not less than 30 days prior to the proposed MDA Meeting, to each Region secretary, every Delegate of whose existence notice has been given to the MDA and each Member Council;
 - (c) by posting of the details of the proposed MDA Meeting on the MDA's website,
not less than 30 days prior to the proposed MDA Meeting;
 - (d) details with notice or posting must include:
 - (i) the date, time and place of the MDA Meeting;
 - (ii) any motions proposed, including those initiated by a Region, Member Council or any other Member;
- (7) A quorum for an MDA Meeting is 30 Delegates present at the meeting.
- (8) An MDA Meeting will be presided over by either the President of the Board or such other person appointed through a vote of Delegates present at the MDA Meeting.
- (9) Only Delegates are entitled to vote on matters considered by or at a MDA Meeting or in respect of MDA matters generally.

- (10) Voting at a MDA meeting must occur as follows:
- (a) each Delegate (that is Region Delegates, Member Council Delegates or Life Member Delegates) have a single vote;
 - (b) Member Council Delegates may vote through a proxy provided:
 - (i) not less than one Member Council Delegate appointed by the same Member Council is present; and
 - (ii) the relevant proxy has been given in writing to that Member Council Delegate who is present;
 - (c) Region Delegates and Life Member Delegates must be present at the MDA Meeting to vote;
 - (d) a matter the subject of a vote may be passed by an ordinary (51%) majority;
 - (e) in the case of a tied vote, the Chair appointed to preside at the MDA Meeting shall have a casting vote, in addition to any vote as a Delegate.
- (11) In any case where the Board considers a matter to be determined by the MDA is to be determined through a postal vote, the following must occur:
- (a) the Board will provide not less than 30 days' written notice of such proposal;
 - (b) the notice must contain the clear and specific detail of a matter or matters for decision by a postal vote;
 - (c) the vote must call for a yes or no response and no amendment to the nature of the question or outcome which is the subject of the proposed vote may occur;
 - (d) all and only Delegates may respond to a postal vote and those Delegates must do that personally;
 - (e) in the case of a tied postal vote, the proposal or issue for determination fails.

Part 7 – Chief Executive Officer

18. Chief Executive Officer

- (1) The Board shall appoint a Chief Executive Officer.
- (2) The Chief Executive Officer shall be responsible to the Board for the administration and operation generally of the MDA.
- (3) The Chief Executive Officer:
 - (a) shall carry out the Board's instructions;
 - (b) shall be responsible for the appointment of staff and retention of contractors.

Part 8 – Financial

19. Financial

- (1) Each Member of the MDA will contribute an annual fee based on the category of membership. Such annual fee:
 - (a) as to amount; and
 - (b) amount in respect of category of Member,will be set and potentially varied, on an annual basis, by the Board.
- (2) The Board may reduce, waive or accept instalment payments or make such arrangements as it thinks fit in relation to the application and calculation of the annual fee provided any reduction or waiver must be due to financial or other hardship, evidence of which has been provided (in confidence) to the Board.
- (3) The Board may, from time to time, provide to the Regions such funds as are considered appropriate, by the Board, to undertake activities within the particular Region.

Part 9 – Life Members

20. Life Members

- (1) A Life Member of the MDA is:
 - (a) a person named in Schedule 1; or
 - (b) any person nominated by a Member, endorsed by the Board and elected as a Life Member at an MDA Meeting.
- (2) The Board may prepare a Code for the consideration and approval of Life Members which will apply once adopted by a resolution at an MDA Meeting.
- (3) A Life Member is automatically a Delegate for the purposes of attendance, participation and voting at an MDA Meeting, provided the Life Member's voting right may not be a subject of a proxy.

Part 10 – Membership Generally

21. Application for membership

- (1) An application for membership of the MDA:
 - (a) must be made in writing in the form and in the manner determined by the Board, and
 - (b) must include an agreement by the applicant to be bound by this Constitution and any Code, and
 - (c) must be lodged with the Public Officer of the MDA.
- (2) As soon as practicable after receiving an application for membership, the Public Officer must refer the application to the Board. The Board must determine whether to approve or to reject the application in its absolute discretion. Where an applicant qualifies for multiple categories of membership, the Board may, in its absolute discretion, determine which category it deems to be most suitable for the applicant.
- (3) As soon as practicable after the Board makes that determination, the Public Officer must:
 - (a) notify the applicant, in writing, that the Board approved or rejected the application (whichever is applicable) and if the applicant was approved, the applicant's category of membership, and
 - (b) if the Board approved the application, request the applicant to pay (within the period of 28 days after receipt by the applicant of the notification) the sum payable under this Constitution by a Member as an annual fee (if applicable), and
 - (c) on payment by the applicant of the amounts referred to in sub clause 21(3)(b) within the period referred to in that provision (if applicable), enter or cause to be entered the applicant's name in the register of Members and, on the name being so entered, the applicant becomes a Member of the MDA.
- (4) The determination of the Board in respect of an applicant's application and the applicant's membership category is final. The Board is not required to provide reasons for its determination.
- (5) A Member may apply for a change of membership category. Subclasses (2) to (4), with applicable changes, will apply to an application for a membership category change.

22. Cessation of membership

A Member ceases to be a Member of the MDA if:

- (a) for Individual Members and Organisation Members, the Member annual fee is overdue for more than 90 days and the Board ends the membership,
- (b) for Member Councils, the annual fee remains unpaid after the failure to pay has been raised at an MDA meeting and the meeting decides to end the membership;
- (c) in the case of an individual – dies or is declared bankrupt, or
- (d) the Board resolves to end the membership;
- (e) the Member resigns membership,
- (f) the Member is expelled from the MDA in accordance with clause 28, or
- (g) ceases to be eligible to be a Member, or

- (h) in the case of an organisation – is insolvent, or is being wound up or deregistered, or has a receiver, administrator, manager, liquidator or other controller (howsoever described) appointed over the organisation or a substantial part of its assets.

23. *Membership entitlements not transferable*

A right, privilege or obligation which a person has by reason of being a Member of the MDA:

- (a) is not capable of being transferred or transmitted to another person, and
- (b) terminates on cessation of membership.

24. *Register of Members*

- (1) The Public Officer of the MDA must establish and maintain a register of Members of the MDA specifying the name and postal address and principal place of business of each Member of the MDA, the date on which the Member became a Member, the category of membership, and the contact details of the Member's representatives if applicable.
- (2) The register of Members must be kept:
 - (a) at the main premises of the MDA, or
 - (b) if the MDA has no premises, at the MDA's official address.
- (3) The register of Members must be open for inspection, free of charge, by any Member of the MDA during business hours.
- (4) A Member must not use information about a person obtained from the register to contact or send material to the person. However, a Member may use information about a person obtained from the register for:
 - (a) the purposes of sending the person a notice in respect of a meeting or other event relating to the MDA or other material genuinely relating to the MDA or its management, or
 - (b) any other purpose necessary to comply with a requirement of the Act or the Regulation.

25. *Members' liabilities*

The liability of Member Councils of the MDA to contribute towards the payment of the debts and liabilities of the MDA or the costs, charges and expenses of the winding up of the MDA is limited to \$1. Other Members are not required to contribute.

26. *Conduct Code or Codes*

- (1) A conduct Code or Codes will be prepared in respect of the conduct of:
 - (a) the Board and Board Meetings;
 - (b) MDA Meetings;
 - (c) Region Meetings;
 - (d) Members in the various MDA forums; and
 - (e) CEO and other staff.
- (2) Any conduct Code must be prepared (and varied) at the direction and by resolution of the Board.

- (3) A Code must be complied with by Members, Representatives and Delegates.

27. Resolution of disputes

- (1) A dispute between the MDA, or any of the Members of the MDA, or with the MDA, or with a Region, is to be referred to a mediator agreed by the parties to the dispute, or in the absence of agreement, by a mediator nominated by the President of the Law Council of Australia (or his or her nominee).
- (2) If a dispute is not resolved by mediation within 3 months of the referral under sub clause (1), any party to the dispute may commence proceedings.
- (3) A party to the dispute must not commence proceedings unless that party has complied with this clause 27, except in the case of a party seeking urgent interlocutory relief.

28. Disciplining of Members

- (1) A complaint may be made to the Board by a Member of the MDA if a Member:
- (a) has refused or neglected to comply with a provision or provisions of this Constitution or any MDA Code, or
 - (b) in the case of individuals – has acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests or reputation of the MDA or unbecoming of a Member, or
 - (c) in the case of Members who are not individuals – the officers, employees or agents of the Member have acted in a manner prejudicial to the interests or reputation of the MDA or unbecoming of a Member.
- (2) The Board may refuse to deal with a complaint if it considers the complaint to be trivial or vexatious in nature.
- (3) If the Board decides to deal with the complaint, the Board:
- (a) must cause notice of the complaint to be served on the Member concerned, and
 - (b) must give the Member at least 14 days from the time the notice is served within which to make submissions to the Board in connection with the complaint, and
 - (c) must take into consideration any submissions made by the Member in connection with the complaint.
- (4) The Board may decide to expel the Member from the MDA or suspend the Member from membership of the MDA if, after considering the complaint and any submissions made in connection with the complaint, it is satisfied that the facts alleged in the complaint have been proved and the expulsion or suspension is warranted in the circumstances.
- (5) If the Board expels or suspends a Member, the Public Officer must, within 7 days after the action is taken, cause written notice to be given to the Member of the action taken, of the reasons given by the Board for having taken that action and of the Member's right of appeal under clause 29.
- (6) The expulsion or suspension does not take effect:
- (a) until the expiration of the period within which the Member is entitled to appeal against the decision concerned, or
 - (b) if within that period the Member exercises the right of appeal, unless and until the decision is confirmed under clause 29, whichever is the later.

29. *Right of appeal of disciplined Member*

- (1) A Member may appeal to a disciplinary appeal committee against a decision of the Board under clause 28, within 7 days after notice of the decision is served on the Member, by lodging with the Public Officer a notice to that effect. The disciplinary appeal committee will consist of:
 - (a) an independent chair, who will be a suitably qualified lawyer nominated by the President of the Law Council of Australia (or his or her nominee), and
 - (b) at least two further persons selected by the Board who have not been involved with the original decision of the Board.
- (2) The notice may, but need not, be accompanied by a statement of the grounds on which the Member intends to rely for the purposes of the appeal.
- (3) On receipt of a notice from a Member under sub clause (1), the Public Officer must notify the Board which is to convene the disciplinary appeal committee and schedule a hearing within 56 days after the date on which the Public Officer received the notice.
- (4) At a disciplinary appeal committee hearing convened under sub clause (3):
 - (a) no business other than the question of the appeal is to be transacted, and
 - (b) the Board (or nominee) and the Member must be given the opportunity to state their respective cases orally or in writing, or both.
- (5) The appeal is to be determined by a unanimous decision of the disciplinary appeal committee

Part 11 – General Provisions

30. *Insurance and indemnities*

- (1) In this clause “**officer**” means:
 - (a) a Member of the Board, and
 - (b) a person, such as an executive officer or chief executive officer, who makes, or participates in making, decisions that affect the whole of the MDA, or has the capacity to affect the financial standing of the MDA.
- (2) To the extent permitted by law, the MDA indemnifies every person who is or has been an officer out of the assets of the MDA against any liability incurred by the officer in or arising out of the conduct of the affairs or business of the MDA, or in or arising out of the discharge of the duties of the officer, unless such liability arises out of conduct involving a lack of good faith.
- (3) To the extent permitted by law, the MDA may (but is not obliged to) pay, or agree to pay insurance premiums for any directors or officers liability insurance which may cover liability incurred by officers in, or arising out of, the conduct of the business of the MDA, or in or arising out of, the discharge of the duties of the officer.

31. *Funds - source*

- (1) The funds of the MDA are to be derived from annual fees, donations, grants, contracts, service level agreements and such other sources as the Board determines.

- (2) All money received by the MDA must be deposited as soon as practicable and without deduction to the credit of the MDA's bank or other authorised deposit-taking institution account.
- (3) The MDA must, as soon as practicable after receiving any money, issue an appropriate receipt.

32. Funds - management

The funds of the MDA are to be used in pursuance of the objects of the MDA in such manner as the Board determines.

33. Custody of books etc

Except as otherwise provided by this Constitution, the Public Officer must keep in his or her custody or under his or her control all records, books and other documents relating to the MDA.

34. Service of notices

- (1) For the purpose of this Constitution, a notice may be served on or given to a person:
 - (a) by delivering it to the person personally, or
 - (b) by sending it by pre-paid post to the address of the person, or
 - (c) by sending it by email or some other form of electronic transmission to an address specified by the person for giving or serving the notice.
- (2) For the purpose of this Constitution, a notice is taken, unless the contrary is proved, to have been given or served:
 - (a) in the case of a notice given or served personally, on the date on which it is received by the addressee, and
 - (b) in the case of a notice sent by pre-paid post, on the date when it would have been delivered in the ordinary course of post, and
 - (c) in the case of a notice sent by facsimile transmission or some other form of electronic transmission, on the date it was sent or, if the device from which the transmission was sent produces a report indicating that the notice was sent on a later date, on that date.

35. Financial year

The financial year of the MDA is:

- (a) the period of time commencing on the date of incorporation of the MDA and ending on the following 30 June, and
- (b) each period of 12 months after the expiration of the previous financial year of the MDA, commencing on 1 July and ending on the following 30 June.

36. Not-for-profit clause

- (1) The assets and income of the MDA are to be applied solely in the furtherance of its objects. No portion of the MDA's assets and income are to be distributed directly or indirectly to its Members by way of fee, salary, dividend, bonus or otherwise.
- (2) The Members of the Board will not be entitled to receive fees for their service on the Board (eg: sitting fees).

- (3) Nothing in sub clauses (1) and (2) prevents the payment in good faith to a Board member or Member:
- (a) of remuneration for any services to the MDA in the ordinary and usual course of business,
 - (b) for goods supplied in the ordinary and usual course of business,
- provided that any such payment, or any other payment permitted by this Constitution, made or proposed to be made to a Board member, has been approved by the Board (in any generic or specific case).
- (4) Nothing in sub clauses (1) and (2) prevents the reimbursement for out-of-pocket expenses incurred in carrying out the duties of a Board member where payment does not exceed any amount approved by the Board (in any generic or specific case).

37. *Dissolution clause*

- (1) Subject to this Constitution, upon the MDA being dissolved or wound up, any surplus that remains (after such dissolution and the payment of all debts and liabilities) is to be transferred to another fund authority or institution.
- (a) having objects similar to the objects of the MDA and which are charitable at law;
 - (b) whose rules prohibit the distribution of its or their income and property among its or their Members to an extent at least as great as is imposed on the MDA under this Constitution; and
 - (c) if the MDA is endorsed by the Commissioner for Taxation as income tax exempt those other institutions are also currently endorsed as income tax exempt on the same basis.
- (2) The fund, authority or institution will be determined by a vote of Delegates before the time of dissolution or winding up.

38. *Amendment of constitution*

- (1) MDA may amend this Constitution and its objects by special resolution of Delegates at an MDA Meeting, subject to following sub clauses.
- (2) Any amendment to this Constitution, including this sub clause (2), will not take effect unless a majority of the Delegates are in favour of the proposed amendment

39. *Government grants and assets*

An asset or part of an asset of the MDA consisting of property supplied by a government department, public authority or council, including the unexpended portion of a grant, must be returned to:

- (a) the department, authority or council that supplied the property, or
- (b) a body nominated by that department, authority or council.

40. *Confidentiality and intellectual property*

In the furtherance of the MDA's activities, the MDA may provide Board members (and any organisation they represent under this Constitution) and Members (and their officers, employees, agents, contractors), access to sensitive, commercial-in-

confidence or confidential information (“**information**”). Each Board member and Member must ensure that a recipient from them of such information:

- (a) will keep the information confidential, and will not disclose the information to any other person unless:
 - (i) the person is a permitted recipient with a need to know,
 - (ii) disclosure is required by law or government policy,
 - (iii) disclosure is with the MDA’s prior written consent, or
 - (iv) the information is already in the public domain other than by a breach of any confidentiality obligation,
- (b) will only be used for the purposes of preventing or controlling diseases, and the information must not be copied, modified, adapted or exploited for any commercial purposes, and
- (c) will comply with the MDA’s information disclosure policies as published from time to time by the Board.

Schedule 1 - Life Members

Mr Graham Camac	Meningie	Region 6
Mr David Dalzell	Whyalla	Region 8
Ms Pauline Frost	Adelaide	Region 7
Cr Les Hill	Berri	Region 5
Mr Brian J Grogan OAM	Mildura	Region 4
Mr Bill Gorman	Mulwala	Region 2
Dr Terry Hillman AM	Lavington	Region 1
Mr Jim Hullick OAM	Adelaide	Region 7
Mr Jack Larkin OAM	Spring Gully	Region 2
Mr J (Bede) Mecham	Wagga Wagga	Region 9
Mr Max Moor	Barmah	Region 2
Mr Philip Moore	Melbourne	-
Mr Don Oberin	Echuca	Region 2
Mr Kevin Pell OAM	Nathalia	Region 2
Mr Phillip Potter	Jingellic	Region 1
Mr Wulf Reichler	Brewarrina	Region 10
Mr Ken Rogers	Dubbo	Region 10



CONSTITUTION 2006

**Adopted at the Annual General Meeting at Barham, NSW
on 22 September 2006**

- Amendment No 1: Murray Darling Environmental Foundation Rules amended at Board meeting, February 2008**
- Amendment No 2: Adopted at the AGM in Leeton, NSW on 29 August 2008**
- Amendment No 3: Adopted at the AGM in Elizabeth, SA on 4 September 2009**
- Amendment No 4: Murray Darling Environmental Foundation Rules 1.3 amended at Board meeting, November 2009.**
- Amendment No 5: Adopted at the AGM in Mildura, Vic on August 24 2013 Timing of the AGM refer clauses 7.4 and 8.3**

1.0 NAME

- 1.1 The Murray Darling Association Incorporated (the Association) is the name adopted from 27 August, 1992, for the Organisation named "Murray Valley League for Development and Conservation Incorporated" from 1 March, 1979, after being constituted as the "Murray Valley Development League", by resolution of the Yarrowonga Conference on 15 August, 1944 and by the South Australian regions at the Murray Bridge Conference on 8 December, 1944.

2.0 ORIGIN AND PURPOSE

- 2.1 The Association was formed by Local Government and recognises its special relationship with Local Government. The continuing support of Local Government is central to achieving the objectives of the Association.
- 2.2 The Association recognises the Murray-Darling Basin as its focus and seeks to ensure that the environmental integrity of the Basin is conserved and protected while sustainable development is encouraged.
- 2.3 The Association believes that Local Government has a major role in natural resource management and the Association will assist local government irrespective of political boundaries.
- 2.4. The Association is a focus for community participation in the Basin and will provide information, facilitate debate and seek to influence the policies of governments.

3.0 OBJECTIVES

- 3.1 The objectives of the Association are:
 - 3.1.1 To promote the right balance between consumptive use and water for the environment.
 - 3.1.2 To promote sustainable development.
 - 3.1.3 To recognise the social values of the Basin and ensure they are maintained.
 - 3.1.4 To engage in partnerships with bodies who undertake relevant research projects.
 - 3.1.5 To support educational initiatives that promotes and develops the Basin.
- 3.2 To maintain and develop good relations with governments the Association will:
 - 3.2.1 Co-operate with and assist the Commonwealth Government and Governments of the Australian Capital Territory, New South Wales, Queensland, South Australia and Victoria in any action, which will, in the Association's opinion, advance the development of the Murray-Darling Basin.

4.0 DEFINITIONS

- 4.1 In this constitution:

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING – means the Annual General Meeting of the General Council of the Association.

ASSOCIATION – means the Murray Darling Association Incorporated. (MDA)

BOARD – means the Board of Management of the Association.

DELEGATE – means any person or persons appointed to represent Local Government municipalities, Local Government-based organisations and Regions at the General Council meetings and to vote at such meetings, which also includes Financial Members and Life Members.

GENERAL COUNCIL – means Annual General Meeting of delegates of the Association.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT MUNICIPALITY – means see clause 5.1
Any City Council, District Council, Municipality, Rural City Council, Shire Council, or Town Council.

LOCAL GOVERNMENT BASED ORGANISATION – means any organisation which includes Local Government membership on its management committee or board and is accepted by the Association as a local government organisation.

MEMBERS – means – see clause 5.0

PUBLIC OFFICER – means a Board Member who is appointed by the Board to comply with the Associations Incorporations Act 1984 NSW.

REGIONS – means any group of Local Government municipalities as recognised by the Association according to clause 5.1 and listed in Schedule One.

REPRESENTATIVES – means any person/s appointed to attend and vote at regional meetings by Local Government municipalities and local government based organisations.

SEAL – means the Common Seal of the Murray Darling Association.

SPECIAL RESOLUTION – means a vote of 75 percent of those present and eligible to vote

5.0 MEMBERS

- 5.1 The members of the Association shall be such Local Government municipalities and Local Government-based organisations as are accepted by the Board of the Association, and ratified by General Council.
- 5.2 Any person, firm, company, community and other organisations, government department or agency by contributing the sum prescribed from time to time by the Board may be accepted as members of the Association.
- 5.3 Financial members shall be entitled to receive the *Riverlander Notes*, to attend Regional and General Council meetings, and shall be entitled to one vote at Regional and General Council (AGM) meetings.

6.0 REGIONS

- 6.1 Regions of the Association shall constitute those Local Government groupings outlined in Schedule 1 (attached), as amended from time to time by resolution of the Board.
- 6.2 Within each region, the member Local Government municipalities' representatives and members of the Association shall constitute a region.
- 6.3 Regions shall meet at least annually.
- 6.4 Regions shall elect annually the following who shall be a regional executive:
 - Chair,
 - One or more Vice-Chair,
 - Secretary, and
 - such other officers and such sub-committees as it sees fit.
- 6.5 The role of a Region includes:
 - 6.5.1 Initiating action on regional issues within Association policy.
 - 6.5.2 Encouraging support for the Association and its policies.
 - 6.5.3 Initiating, discussion on regional and Murray-Darling Basin issues.

- 6.5.4 To increase awareness of the Association and the Murray-Darling Basin by supporting education.
 - 6.5.5 Recommending changes to policy to the Board or General Council.
 - 6.5.6 Encouraging financial support for the Association.
 - 6.5.7 Appointing up to eight delegates, one of whom shall be the Regional Chairman, to the General Council (AGM).
- 6.6 A report of business dealt with by a Region shall be forwarded to the General Manager for the attention of the Board.
- 6.7 Joint meetings of Regions
- 6.7.1 Regions are encouraged to hold joint meetings to discuss matters of common interest.
 - 6.7.2 Any joint meeting may appoint a person to preside over the meeting.
 - 6.7.3 Any joint meeting shall have the same roles as a region.
- 6.8 Each member Local Government municipality may appoint:
- 6.8.1 A delegate to the General Council (Annual General Meeting).
 - 6.8.2 Local Government municipalities with a population in excess of 20,000 may appoint additional delegates on the basis of one for each additional 20,000 or part thereof, provided they contribute at least the amount set from time to time, by the General Council. The maximum number of delegates allowed being five.
 - 6.8.3 Up to five representatives to the relevant region. At least one representative shall be an elected member.
 - 6.8.4 A Local Government municipality may appoint amongst its representatives members of the public.
 - 6.8.5 A region may by resolution allow member local government municipalities to appoint additional representatives.
 - 6.8.6 Any representative may appoint in writing directed to the chairman of the region an alternative representative, who shall have all the powers of the representative.
 - 6.8.7 Each member Local Government based organisation may appoint a delegate to the General Council and up to three representatives to the relevant region.

7.0 BOARD

- 7.1 The Role of the Board is:
- 7.1.1 Manage the affairs of the Association between Annual General Meetings.
 - 7.1.2 Provide and monitor good governance processes.
 - 7.1.3 Carry out the directions of the Annual General Meeting.
 - 7.1.4 Prepare, manage and monitor the annual budget.
 - 7.1.5 Secure the necessary resources for the Association to carry out its role.
 - 7.1.6 Develop and monitor policy directions and strategic plans.
 - 7.1.7 Appoint a General Manager, Public Officer and Auditor.
 - 7.1.8 Monitor and review the organisation's performance.
 - 7.1.9 Appoint sub-committees and/or staff to address issues and carry out Board

activities.

- 7.2 The Board shall comprise of:
 - 7.2.1 The Chairs of the Regions as listed in Schedule One shall form the Board.
 - 7.2.2 The Board members at the Board meeting prior to the Annual General Meeting shall appoint a President and a Vice President to serve for the following year.
 - 7.2.3 The Board at the Board meeting prior to the Annual General Meeting shall appoint a Treasurer who may be a Board member or financial member of the Association. If the latter, he/she will only sit on the Association's Administration and Policy Committee.
- 7.3 The quorum shall be decided by dividing the total number of voting members of the Board by two, ignoring any fraction resulting from the division, and adding one.
- 7.4 The Board shall meet a minimum of four times a year, these being in March, June, October and December with the exception that the October meeting will be held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting. The President may alter any of these meeting dates if he/she considers it necessary.
- 7.5 Board Meeting Attendance:
 - 7.5.1 All members of the Board, except the National President, may appoint a proxy to represent them at any meeting. Any such proxy is to be notified in writing to the National President or in his/her absence to the person presiding over the meeting.
 - 7.5.2 If a member of the Board of Management is absent without apology or leave of absence for two consecutive meetings of the Board, they cease to be a member of the Board.
- 7.6 The Board may appoint committees to carry out specific functions. The Board will, by resolution, determine who will serve on the committee and the functions that the committee will perform.
- 7.7 The Board may delegate to a committee or staff the following powers:
 - 7.7.1 Within policy, to manage issues of general interest.
 - 7.7.2 To deal with matters specifically referred by the Board.
 - 7.7.3 To prepare or cause to be prepared reports or documents for consideration by the Board or General Council.
- 7.8 A delegation by the Board is revocable by resolution at any time and does not prevent the Board acting itself in any matter.
- 7.9 The Board shall keep a record of all delegations and shall review all delegations at the first meeting of the Board after the Annual General Meeting of the General Council.
- 7.10 Motions for the Annual General Meeting will be received and circulated to Board members at least 42 days prior to the AGM so that a collective Board view with recommendations and arguments can be placed before the AGM to improve debate and decision-making.

8.0 GENERAL COUNCIL

- 8.1 The General Council shall meet at least annually.
- 8.2 The General Council may decide upon the place of its next meeting, and if it does not nominate a place, the Board shall make the choice.

- 8.3 The Annual General Meeting shall be held within four months of the end of the financial year.
- 8.4 The General Council shall consist of delegates from regions, member Local Councils and Local Government based organisations.
- 8.5 The Quorum for a General Council meeting shall be 50.
- 8.6 The National President may call a special General Council meeting. Any two Regions may in writing, request the National President to call a Special Meeting of the General Council. Should two Regions request a meeting, the National President shall convene the meeting within one month of the request.
- 8.7 A notice convening an AGM shall be sent to each regional secretary, every delegate and each member of Local Council, 7 days prior to the meeting and will include:
 - 8.7.1 Date, time and place of meeting
 - 8.7.2 Notices of motions
 - 8.7.3 Motions from regions and member local councils.
 - 8.7.4 Such notices will be sent by mail or email and will also be posted on the Murray Darling Association's website
- 8.8 Each delegate present shall have one vote on matters before the meeting.
- 8.9 The person presiding over the meeting shall only have one casting vote.

9.0 CASUAL VACANCIES

- 9.1 Any casual vacancies occurring in an appointment within the office bearers of a region shall be filled by that region.
- 9.2 Any appointment held by an individual who becomes bankrupt or is insane or is convicted of a criminal offence or ceases to hold the qualification necessary for his/her appointment shall be deemed vacant.

10.0 GENERAL MANAGER

- 10.1 The Board shall appoint a General Manager.
- 10.2 The General Manager shall be responsible to the Board for the Murray Darling Association administration.
- 10.3 The General Manager shall carry out Board instructions.
- 10.4 The General Manager shall be responsible for the appointment of staff.

11.0 INCORPORATION AND OFFICE

- 11.1 The Association was incorporated, with limited liability, in New South Wales under the Associations Incorporations Act 1984 (NSW) on 8 June 1988. The Association's registered number is Y 04317-47.
- 11.2 The head office of the Association shall be at Albury or such other place as the General Council may decide.

12.0 FINANCIAL

- 12.1 Each member Local Government municipality or Local Government organisation shall contribute to the finances of the Association an annual amount based on population or other agreed formula.
- 12.2 The rate of the annual Local Government membership fees shall be determined by the Board.
- 12.3 An introductory rate will be offered to new Local Government municipality members at the following rate:
- 12.3.1 For riparian Local Government municipality members:
- One fifth (1/5) of the full rate in the first year
 - One third (1/3) of the full rate in the second year
 - Two thirds (2/3) of the full rate in the third year
 - Full fee in the fourth and subsequent years
- 12.3.2 For non-riparian Local Government municipality members
- One half (1/2) of the full rate in the first year
 - Full fee in the second and subsequent years
- 12.4 The Board may accept a contribution less than the amount decided by General Council if deemed appropriate.
- 12.5 The Board from time to time may provide regions with such funds as are needed to undertake regional activities.
- 12.6 The Association may accept contributions from private, commercial, government or other sources.
- 12.7 No rebate, refund or dividend shall be given to any member.
- 12.8 In the event of the termination of the Association's activities, funds in hand shall be used at the discretion of the General Council in the manner most consistent with the Association's objectives.
- 12.9 The Board may set a one-off annual special contribution.

13.0 ACCOUNTS

- 13.1 The General Council shall cause to be kept, at an office of the Association (or elsewhere as it may decide), full, true and complete books of account of the affairs and transactions of the Association.
- 13.2 Audited annual financial statements shall be sent to each region, made available to all members of the Association and presented at the Annual General Meeting of General Council.

14.0 BANKERS

- 14.1 The bankers of the Association shall be any Australian bank as approved by the Board.

15.0 GENERAL PROVISIONS

- 15.1 In furthering its objectives the Association may:
- 15.1.1 Employ staff and agents, establish offices, organise meetings and produce advertising and publicity.

- 15.1.2 Act as an agent or consultant.
- 15.2 The Association may buy, sell, lease or otherwise acquire or dispose of land, buildings and goods as required.
- 15.3 The Association may borrow money to give effect to the Association's policy and/or to achieve the Association's objectives.
- 15.4 Seal – The General Manager shall provide for the safe custody of the Seal which shall only be used by the authority of the Board.

16.0 LIFE MEMBERS

- 16.1 The General Council on the recommendation of the Board may award life membership for exceptional services to the Association.
- 16.2 A Life Member shall be entitled to receive notice of all regional and General Council Meetings, to attend, speak, and to vote at the same, provided the Life Member attends at least two regional meetings during the previous year.

17.0 MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION FOUNDATION

- 17.1 The Association may establish a Foundation to be known as the Murray Darling Association Environmental Foundation.
- 17.2 The Foundation shall operate in accordance with the Rules of the Foundation Schedule Two.
- 17.3 Amendments to the Rules of the Foundation shall be approved by the Board.

18.0 AMENDMENT TO THE CONSTITUTION

- 18.1 Amendments to this Constitution must be lodged with the General Manager six weeks prior to the General Council Meeting (AGM).
- 18.2 The General Manager will list all motions in the agenda for the AGM.
- 18.3 A motion to amend the Constitution must be carried by a special resolution.

SCHEDULE ONE

REGIONS OF THE MURRAY DARLING ASSOCIATION INCORPORATED (see clause 6.1)

- Region 1: New South Wales – Albury City and the shires of Corowa, Greater Hume, Tumbarumba and Urana.
Victoria - the cities of Wangaratta, Wodonga and Benalla, and the shires of Alpine, Indigo, Mansfield and Towong.
- Region 2: New South Wales - the Municipality of Deniliquin, and the shires of Berrigan, Conargo, Jerilderie, and Murray.
Victoria - the cities of Greater Bendigo and Greater Shepparton, the shires of Campaspe, Moira and Strathbogie.
- Region 3: New South Wales - the shires of Balranald, and Wakool.
Victoria - the Rural City of Swan Hill, and the shires of Buloke, Gannawarra and Loddon.
- Region 4: New South Wales - the City of Broken Hill, the shires of Central Darling and Wentworth and the Unincorporated Areas west of the Darling.
In Victoria - the Rural City of Mildura and the shires of Hindmarsh and Yarriambiack.
- Region 5: South Australia - the District Councils of Berri Barmera, Loxton Waikerie and Renmark Paringa.
- Region 6: South Australia - the Rural City of Murray Bridge and Alexandrina, Coorong and Mid Murray Councils, the district councils of Karoonda/East Murray, Mount Barker, Southern Mallee, Tatiara and Victor Harbor.
- Region 7: South Australia - the City of Adelaide, other Adelaide metropolitan councils and non-riparian councils whose domestic, urban and industrial water supplies are from the Murray River, including the cities of Adelaide, Burnside Campbelltown, Charles Sturt, Holdfast Bay, Marion, Mitcham, Norwood, Payneham & St Peters, Onkaparinga Playford, Port Adelaide-Enfield, Tea Tree Gully, West Torrens, Adelaide Hills Council, Town of Gawler and Town of Walkerville, Unley
- Region 8: South Australia - the non-riparian councils north of Mallala whose domestic, urban and industrial water supplies are from the River Murray, including the cities of Port Augusta and Whyalla, councils of Clare & Gilbert Valleys, Northern Areas, Barossa, regional councils of Port Pirie, Goyder and Wakefield, district councils of Barunga West Mallala, Mount Remarkable, Copper Coast and Yorke Peninsula
- Region 9: New South Wales – Local Councils that are located wholly or partly within the Murrumbidgee Catchment Management Authority.
- Region 10: New South Wales – Local Councils that are located wholly or partly within the Central West Catchment Management Authority, from Bathurst to Bourke
- Region 11: New South Wales – Local Councils that are located wholly or partly within the Border Rivers-Gwydir Catchment Management Authority.
Queensland – the Upper Condamine and Border rivers
- Region 12: New South Wales - Local Councils that are located wholly or partly within the Western Catchment Management Authority.
Queensland – the Balonne, Warrego and Paroo Rivers

SCHEDULE TWO

The Murray Darling Foundation



RULES OF THE FOUNDATION

Revised and endorsed on 29 August 2008

The Murray Darling Association Foundation has been established by the Murray Darling Association Inc to receive tax-effective public donations from which payments shall be made to accepted and approved projects to achieve the environmental objectives of the Murray Darling Association Inc across the Murray-Darling Basin as well as in areas of South Australia that receive water from the Basin.

1. Management of the Foundation

- 1.1 The Murray Darling Association Foundation, 'the Foundation' shall be managed by the Murray Darling Foundation Committee 'the Foundation Committee'.
- 1.2 The Foundation Committee shall be appointed by the Board of Management of the Murray Darling Association Inc.
- 1.3 The Foundation Committee shall consist of up to eight persons of whom the majority of the Foundation Committee are responsible persons as defined by the Commonwealth Department of Environment and Water. Committee members shall serve a period of three years.
- 1.4 A member may resign from the Foundation Committee by giving notice in writing to the Committee.
- 1.5 The Foundation Committee shall accept responsibility for, and ensure that, proper bank accounts and statements of the Foundation are maintained.
- 1.6 The Foundation Committee may recommend amendments to these rules to the Board of the Murray Darling Association.

2. Meetings of the Foundation Committee

- 2.1 The Foundation Committee shall meet at least every six months at a place agreed between the Foundation Committee members and upon the giving of one month's notice to each Committee member of the date, time and place of the meeting.
- 2.2 A quorum shall consist of three members.
- 2.3 The Committee will elect a Chairperson and appoint a secretary and responsible person to keep the bank accounts and statements of the Foundation.
- 2.4 A Foundation Committee member is entitled to appoint a proxy to represent him/her at any meeting of the Foundation committee. However a quorum shall not be present if only by proxy.
- 2.5 The Foundation Committee may meet at any time as agreed between the Committee members
- 2.6 A meeting may occur in person, by telephone or video conference.
- 2.7 At any meeting of the Foundation Committee, the Committee members shall consider the financial statements of the Foundation.
- 2.8 The Foundation Committee shall meet as soon as practical after the expiration of the preceding financial year to consider the audited annual financial statements of the Foundation relating to the immediate past financial year.

3. Funds of the Murray Darling Association Foundation

- 3.1 Foundation funds will be used only to support the environmental objectives of the Association.
- 3.2 Members of the general public, businesses, corporations, community groups, etc. are to be encouraged / invited to make gifts of money or property to the Foundation for the environmental purposes of the Association.
- 3.3 Money from interest on donations, income derived from donated property, and money from the realisation of such property, is to be deposited with the Foundation.
- 3.4 The Foundation may only receive gifts of money or property for the environmental purposes of the Association.
- 3.5 Gifts to the Foundation are to be kept separate from other funds of the Association.
- 3.6 A separate bank account is to be opened to deposit money donated to the Foundation including interest accruing thereon.
- 3.7 Receipts are to be issued in the name of the Foundation and proper accounting records and procedure are to be kept and used for the Foundation.

4. Annual General Meeting

4.1 The Annual General Meeting of the Murray Darling Foundation will be held in conjunction with the Annual General Meeting of the Murray Darling Association Inc, normally held in October of each year.

4.2 An Annual Report of the Foundation, including an audited financial statement, will be included in the Murray Darling Association Annual Report.

5. Not for profit

5.1 The Foundation will be operated on a non-profit basis. None of the money or property accumulated by the Foundation will be distributed to the members of the Association unless for proper remuneration for administrative services to the Foundation.

6. Winding up the Foundation

6.1 In the event of the Foundation winding up, any surplus assets are to be transferred to another fund with similar objectives and which is on the register of Commonwealth Environmental Organisations.

7. Reporting

7.1 Statistical data about gifts to the Foundation during a financial year shall be provided to the Department of Environment and Heritage within four months after the end of that financial year in the form required by the Department of Environment and Heritage.

8. Changes to Foundation Rules

8.1 Any changes to the rules of the Foundation are to be forwarded to the Department of Environment and Heritage within a reasonable time following the making of the changes.



Attachment 5.2



Murray Darling Association Inc.

Strategic Plan 2016-19

It's in the balance





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WELCOME!

One voice representing local government and communities across 14pc of the Australian continent on water-related issues – a powerful voice indeed.

The Murray Darling Association Strategic Plan 2016-19 aims to provide a clear, cohesive and concise statement of the actions that will enable the MDA to fulfil our purpose and to represent our members on issues of local and basin wide significance.

This Plan is a collection of the transformative actions that will provide a platform for genuine local government and community participation in the decisions that impact our communities on Basin-related issues.

With the implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan, there has never been a more important time to ensure that local government and communities work together with all levels of government to ensure balanced outcomes in the management of our resources.

This Strategic Plan identifies our most important needs and prioritises the concentration of our efforts.

Working together, with local government at the core of our membership we can achieve cost efficiencies; generate best practice; stimulate informed debate; identify positive outcomes and most importantly recognise our shared future.

This Plan has been endorsed by members and representatives of the 12 regions across the Basin.

Implementation of the Plan will rely on the strength and commitment of our local government members, our Board and their member councils, and our small but committed team of staff.

In its 72 years, there has never before been a published Plan for the MDA that recognises the importance of the issues unique to the distinct regions of the Basin and articulates a shared vision.

This Plan has benefited from the collective experience of hundreds of members, the contribution of stakeholders from across the policy spectrum, and from supporters and from critics representing a wide range of interests.

On behalf of the Murray Darling Association, I would like to thank those of you who have helped us shape the Strategic Plan 2016-19.

We now look forward to working with you all in its implementation.



Cr David Thurley
National President



Emma Bradbury
Chief Executive Officer

1 STRATEGIC DIRECTION

1.1 OUR VISION

A healthy Murray Darling Basin supports thriving communities, economic development and sustainable productivity.

1.2 OUR PURPOSE

To provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by providing:

- information
- facilitating debate
- seeking to influence government policy.

1.3 OUR OBJECTIVES

To achieve our purpose, we will:

- advocate on behalf of Basin communities
- use local knowledge and expertise to fully understand regional issues
- act as a two-way conduit for information and discussion between our communities and governments
- encourage and facilitate debate about the things that matter for the Basin's future
- explore options to achieve sound solutions to regional issues
- test information to ensure a sound base for those options
- be an educational resource for the Basin.



1.4 WHO WE ARE

The Murray Darling Association is a membership-based peak representative organisation representing local government and communities across the Murray Darling Basin.

Established in 1944, the MDA has a strong history steeped in the traditions and achievements of local government.

This ensures that communities affected by the decisions of state and federal government have a clear and articulate voice at the table, informing the direction and realising the impact of those decisions.

1.5 WHERE WE ARE

Murray Darling Association represents 14pc of the Australian land continent.

It spans the length and breadth of the Murray Darling Basin, and includes all its communities and Basin resources.



1.6 WHERE WE ARE AND WHERE WE'RE GOING

STRENGTHS

- primacy of purpose
- our members – the collective expertise across our local government organisations and the experience and passion across our communities
- over 72 years history of continuous service
- lobbying capacity and capability.

OPPORTUNITIES

- to harness the voice of 181 local government organisations across the basin
- to inform policy on Basin-related matters
- membership growth
- engage the next generation of farmers, advocates and community leaders
- better use of social media and information distribution technologies
- clearer definition of regional issues in pursuit of common goals.

WEAKNESSES

- diluted regional engagement in some regions
- fragmentation of messaging or purpose
- membership services
- loss of corporate memory
- financial security/resourcing.

THREATS

- disunity, and division
- poor quality or misinformation, diminishing credibility
- succession management.

2 MEMBERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

2.1 OVERVIEW

Since its foundation, many things have endured at the MDA, including the passion and commitment of our members and the priority of our purpose.

A less lofty legacy is the alarming regularity with which our organisation has reached crisis point for the want of clear direction and good governance.

The definitive history of the organisation *Up and Doing: A brief history of the Murray Valley Development League and the Murray Darling Association from 1944 to 2014* by Adrian Wells notes that the question of whether to disband or fight-on has been considered on numerous occasions, from as far back as 1952.

On each occasion, the board, our members and stakeholders across all levels of government have been resolute. The purpose is essential. We must prevail.

The resilience of the MDA is equal to the community we represent.

Challenges across the organisation have included persistent confusion over voting rights at consecutive AGMs; steady decline in memberships; increase in expectations; inconsistencies in the organisation's messaging; financial uncertainty; and deviations from regulatory compliance.

These challenges threatened the viability of the organisation, prompting the Board to commence a review in 2014 of the MDA's operations, and to ensure in 2016 that the MDA is an organisation that is fit for purpose and that can continue to serve its members through the development of the Strategic Plan.

The result is a lean, focused and dynamic organisation, operating with the support of and for the benefit of local government and the communities of the Murray-Darling Basin.





2.2 OUR MEMBERS

We have four categories of membership:

- **Local government members**

181 municipalities are connected with and derive their wellbeing from the resources of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Local government is directly connected with and representative of almost every aspect of a community and is tasked to ensure the wellbeing of its municipality.

Councils provide over 97pc of our core funding, and are the foundation and the future of our organisation.

Local government members pay a membership fee based on population size.

Supported by organisations staffed by skilled and experienced professionals, and informed and directed by elected representatives, local government is the primary MDA membership category.

- **Life members**

Recognised for their outstanding contribution to Basin communities, life members have, and continue to contribute a wealth of knowledge and experience to the MDA.

There are currently 17 life members.

- **Associate members**

Three categories of associate memberships ensure a diversity of skills, experience and perspectives are well represented, enabling the decisions of the MDA to be more broadly informed.

These categories include: individuals, businesses, not-for-profit and community service organisations.

- **Patrons**

From time-to-time, the association may benefit from connections with outstanding and well-recognised individuals whose experience, connections and skills may be of service to our communities.

Patrons hold a special and valued place in the structure of our organisation.

2.3 OUR CONSTITUTION AND GOVERNANCE

Consistent with the review of the MDA's operations and compliance, the organisation also resolved to review the constitution.

The aim is not to change substantially the objectives/purposes of the organisation, however there are various uncertainties, interpretational issues and, in some cases, errors in the existing constitution.

Importantly, the constitution re-write should not drive discussions.

Rather, the re-write is intended to update the document to have it reflect the current objectives of the organisation and assist the MDA to operate with a clear and compliant governance structure.

The updated constitution will be put before the membership at the 2016 Annual General Meeting AGM in Dubbo.

2.3.1 VOTING RIGHTS

To align with the intention of the constitution as it is currently written, and to reflect the entitlements of the membership categories, the voting rights of members are:



MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY	VOTE AT THE AGM	VOTE AT REGION MEETINGS
Local government	1 vote, plus 1 vote per 20,000 head of population; capped at 3 votes	1 vote per region delegate in attendance. Up to 5 votes per member council
Life member	1 vote	1 vote
Organisation member	1 vote per person Up to 3 delegates per region	1 vote per paid-up member



2.3.2 VOTING PRINCIPLES

The following principles provide clarity on issues that have previously been unclear:

- members of all categories are eligible to hold the position of Regional Chair, entitling them to a seat on the Board of Management
- serving councillors are not eligible for associate membership. This ensures that neither our member councils, individual councillors, nor the MDA are compromised by the potential for conflicting interests
- a local government member representative is not eligible to stand as an associate member delegate at the AGM. This preserves the right and opportunity for individual members to vote at the AGM
- associate member delegates to the AGM are appointed by the membership in each region
- life member votes at the AGM or regional meetings cannot be proxied. Members must be in attendance to vote
- life memberships are capped, and the criteria and process for the awarding of life membership established
- the chair of any meeting has only one casting vote.

2.3.3 ORGANISATION STRUCTURE

The MDA has 12 regions across the basin covering 4 states and the ACT, with regions associated as communities of interest.

Each region is led by a chairman and a deputy chairman.

The chairman is elected annually by members of the region, and is responsible to provide, or appoint from within the region, adequate resources to ensure an effective secretariat.

In most instances, although not exclusively, the regional chair is held by a local government member.

The member council is represented in the chair by a delegated representative, duly appointed to the role by resolution of the member council.



Role of the regional chair:

- represents the interests of the membership at state and federal level, consistent with the resolutions of the region
- promotes growth and engagement within the region, to ensure robust discussion, informed debate, and clear resolutions to determine the advocacy priorities of the region
- conducts and chairs a minimum of four regional meetings per year
- attends bi-monthly meetings of the MDA Council of Regional Chairs
- occupies a position on the MDA board of management, and provides for the good governance of the association.
- attends bi-monthly meetings of the MDA board of management
- provides timely notification and communication between members and stakeholders through the executive
- liaises with the CEO to ensure effective management and maintenance of the region's membership database
- arranges preparation and distribution of meeting agendas and minutes.

Each region's AGM is held at the last regional meeting of the calendar year.

Election of the national president, vice president and treasurer is held in February each year.

The regions are supported by a chief executive officer and small but dedicated team of staff, located in Echuca-Moama. The heart of region 2.

2.3.4 MURRAY DARLING FOUNDATION

The Murray Darling Foundation was formed in 1998 as a sub-committee of the association to enable philanthropists, individuals and businesses to donate funds in a tax-effective way towards the restoration of the Murray-Darling Basin.

Since its inception the foundation has undertaken a number of projects, many of which have had a significant influence on basin life.

2014 saw the dissolution of the committee, a significant cessation of contributions, and a sense that the purpose of the Foundation has been diminished.

The restoration of the Murray-Darling Basin is now well served by the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder, and other state-based authorities.

The Foundation remains a registered entity and there may be opportunities for the Foundation to resume active operation in the future.

Any activities undertaken by the Foundation are required to be self-managed, self-funding, and comply with the regulatory requirements under which it operates.



2.4 ROLES

National President

The National President has a role in chairing the board of management and a further role in effectively representing the adopted position of the MDA on matters of Basin-wide significance.

Regional Chair

The role of the regional chair is to facilitate regular meetings, indentifying the interests and informing the advocacy priorities of their region.

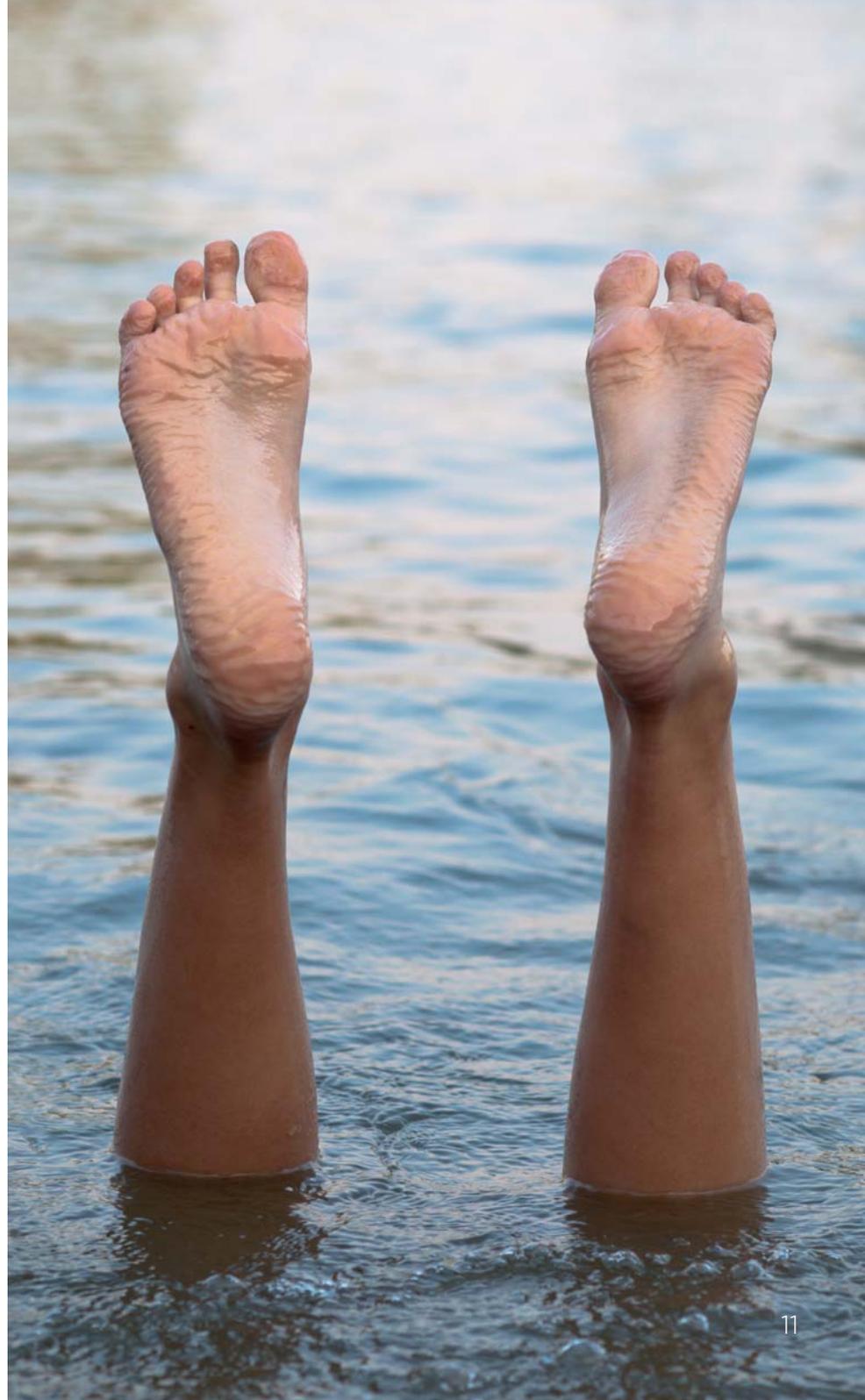
The combined council of regional chairs also forms the board of management of the Murray Darling Association.

It is the role of the board of management to set the strategy for the organisation.

Chief Executive Officer

The role of the chief executive officer is to work with the board of management, the council of regional chairs, and the staff of the organisation to deliver the strategy.

Specific performance indicators, as set by the board of management annually will assist in prioritising the CEO's direction in the role.



2.5 THE BASIN PLAN 2012

Any strategic plan for the Murray Darling Association must clearly recognise the fundamental significance of the Basin Plan 2012 to our current role and purpose.

A core objective of the Basin Plan is to ensure that the social, environmental and economic impacts of the implementation of the Plan is balanced and positive.

The Murray Darling Basin Authority, tasked with the implementation of the basin plan shares with the MDA a commonality of work undertaken, and a mutual appreciation of the challenges faced.

Both authorities recognise the importance of mutual cooperation, consultation and knowledge sharing.

It is important that the Murray Darling Association articulates a clear and united position in relation to the often contentious Plan.

From this the MDA can provide advocacy and direction for policy changes and management practices, and avoid confusion and damage that can be caused by individual

advocates who may purport to represent the Murray Darling Association.

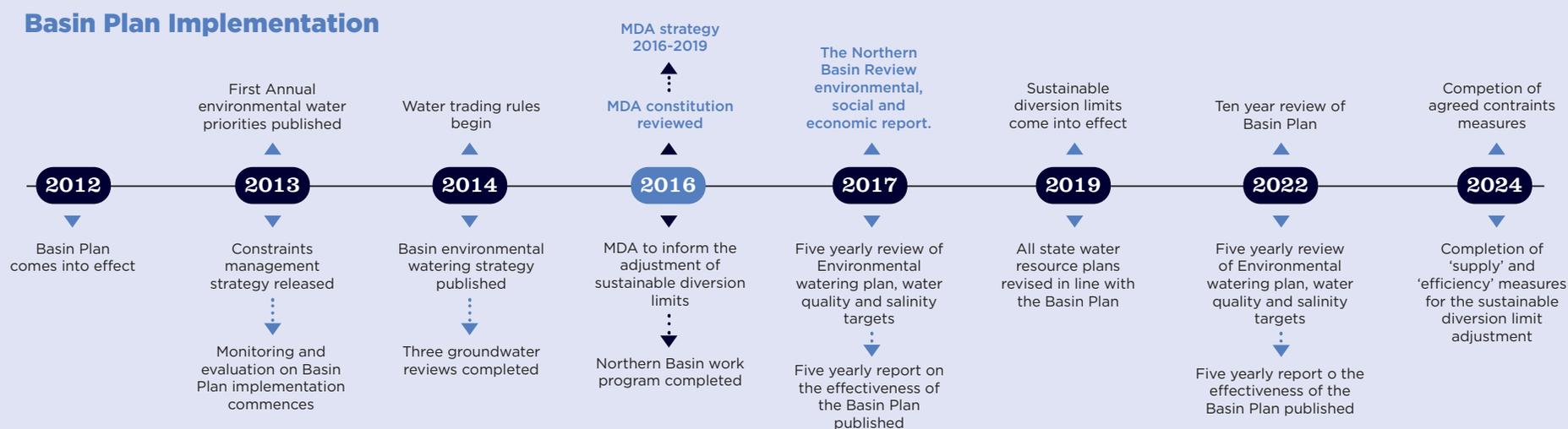
The MDA supports the purpose of and the need for the Basin Plan 2012, and acknowledges that it is an adopted strategy agreed by all states and the commonwealth.

The MDA acknowledges that elements of the basin plan will always benefit from the application of adaptive management principles and practices.

We commit to work constructively with the MDBA, and other stakeholders using our collective engagement and influence for the overall benefit of the Murray Darling Basin and the communities reliant upon its resources, via the implementation of the basin plan.

The MDA will continue to advocate for the development of a rigorous and repeatable basin plan evaluation framework and methodology against which the social and economic impacts of the plan can be measured and assessed.

Any such assessment tool must be able to identify and distinguish short term, unrelated, and one-off impacts from the underlying performance of the Plan.



2.6 REGIONAL ISSUES

As an Association we **share** the vision of a healthy Murray Darling Basin that supports thriving communities, economic development and sustainable productivity, and **work together in our common purpose** to provide effective representation of local government and communities at state and federal level in the management of Basin resources by providing information, facilitating debate, and seeking to influence government policy common.

We also recognise that our regions represent the interests, issues and circumstances of a wide array of communities across a vast tract of the Australian continent.

By working together to better understand the unique issues define, challenge and shape our regions, we are better able to inform policy and achieve shared solutions.

The development of our Issues Map, some of the key issues of which are noted below, will inform the strategic direction and define the work of our regions.

The issues outlined below are not intended to be final. They are a snap-shot from which the regions will each develop a more comprehensive and authoritative Regional Strategy.

For more information contact your Regional Chair.

REGION 1

Chair
Albury City
Council
Cr David
Thurley

- Balance between the use of water for power generation and the operation of Snowy Hydro and water for irrigation and the environment
- Groundwater mining
- Potential impacts of the constraints management strategy

REGION 2

Chair
Deniliquin
Council
Mr Des Bilske

- Impact of the loss of 27% of productive water from the region following the millennium drought. The swiss cheese effect of non-productive farms being interspersed between highly productive irrigated properties with the remaining responsible for higher distribution costs of water.
- The buyback of water increasing the market value of water for both permanent and temporary trade making some crops in low water allocation periods non-viable.
- Constraints management for delivery of environmental water through the systems with the possibility of flooding of productive lands.
- Conversion of productive red gum forests to national parks and resulting loss of employment and royalties to the region.
- Environmental sustainability of the river systems and river valleys.

REGION 3

Chair (interm)
Deniliquin
Council
Mr Des Bilske

- Need for structural adjustment packages for directly affected economically impacted communities
- Efficiency of environmental infrastructure investments
- Regional leadership and local engagement

REGION 4

Mildura Rural
City Council
(interim)

- Quality and quantity of water available through the Menindee Lakes and reliant communities
- Regional leadership and local engagement

REGION 5
Mid-Murray Council
Cr Kevin Myers

- River health
- Balancing the needs and interests of tourism and horticulture
- Managing the uncertainty and diminished confidence that results from poor communication and understanding of the impacts of the Basin Plan.

REGION 6
Alexandrina Council
Cr Barry Featherston

- Lack of available information on the evaluation and monitoring of the Murray Darling Basin Plan
- Quality and quantity of water reaching the Murray Mouth
- Investigation of the connector between the Lower Lakes and the Coorong
- Understanding the trigger points and conditions for the effective use of the desalination plant.

REGION 7
City of Port Adelaide Enfield
Cr Peter Jamieson

- Availability and quality of water available to the metro area – based on conditions impacting the balance of shandy of Mt Lofty catchment resource with water from the river system.
- Economic confidence within the metro area driven by rural and regional conditions.
- Opportunity for contribution of urban and metro development of water saving and management technologies that can benefit rural basin communities.
- Understanding the trigger points and conditions for the effective use of the desalination plant.

REGION 8
Vacant

- Reliance on the availability of Murray water whilst being external to the catchment.
- Understanding the trigger points and conditions for the effective use of the desalination plant.

REGION 9
Leeton Council
Cr Paul Maytom

- Lack of understanding of the progress of the Murray Darling Plan Basin
- Information on the social and economic
- Absence of effective monitoring and evaluation of the social and economic impacts of the Basin Plan creating uncertainty and division
- Efficiency and effectiveness of on-river water storages and delivery

REGION 10
Dubbo City Council
Murray Wood

- No targeted structural adjustment packages for directly affected economically impacted communities
- Absence of feedback from relevant authorities regarding outcomes of social, economic and environments benefits, or other impacts
- Resolution of competing priorities between floodplain graziers and irrigated agriculture and mining.

REGION 11
Vacant

- Northern Basin Review
- Social and economic impacts assessment
- Regional leadership and local engagement

REGION 12
Vacant

- Northern Basin Review
- Regional leadership and local engagement
- Regional leadership and local engagement



GOAL: TO BE A VALUED SOURCE OF ACCURATE, CONCISE, VALID, TIMELY INFORMATION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

Utilise local knowledge and expertise

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Ensure material considered at the regions is a position of the member council/s represented
- ▶ Value and encourage the contribution of associate members
- ▶ To understand and be informed by indigenous experience, expertise and perspectives

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Reference by delegates to the resolutions and policies of the councils they represent
- ▶ Increased satisfaction levels and support by individual members
- ▶ Every region has an MOU with, or membership of local indigenous community representative organisation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To be a two way conduit of information between our membership and responsible authorities

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Test information through a robust and vigorous process of fact checking and application of scientific, and empirical evidence
- ▶ Validate information by utilising valid and valued educational resources
- ▶ To explore viable options for solutions to basin related challenges

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Member councils both provide and rely on information shared between council and the MDA
- ▶ The minutes of region meetings are tabled at council by all council delegates
- ▶ Information is tested and assessed by members and stakeholders
- ▶ Responsible authorities engage more actively and responsively with the MDA

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3:

To build memberships

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Value local government as the representative of the community
- ▶ Value the diversity of experience, expertise and perspective contributed by associate members
- ▶ Demonstrate value to both local government and associate members through a clearly articulated, fair and constructive membership rights
- ▶ Reform the anomalies contained within the voting rights to ensure effective representation of and value for members and responsibilities, including voting rights

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Target 80pc membership of all municipalities in each region
- ▶ Target 1:1 ratio or better of local government and associate memberships across all regions
- ▶ Adopt a compliant and workable draft of the MDA Constitution by 2016

GOAL: TO FACILITATE INFORMED AND CONSTRUCTIVE DEBATE

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

To develop the strength and authority of the regions

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Properly resource our secretariats through data sharing and support
- ▶ Conduct at least 4 region meetings per year
- ▶ Ensure that regional meeting minutes, discussions, and resolutions are detailed, accurate and constructive
- ▶ Support strong leadership within the regions
- ▶ Apply eligibility criteria to regional leadership roles to strengthen regional leadership
- ▶ Maintain current and accurate data to support member engagement
- ▶ Develop consistent processes and procedures, data and resources to support the regional secretariats
- ▶ Encourage councils to appoint appropriately skilled, experienced and qualified delegates
- ▶ Grow membership numbers and participation
- ▶ To re-establish the MDA's presence in the Northern Basin
- ▶ Develop a Communication and Marketing Plan that sets out our pathway to being an effective and efficient conduit of information

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Current and accurate database
- ▶ Compliance across all regions
- ▶ Member councils both provide and rely on information shared between council and the MDA
- ▶ Minutes contribute to and support the advocacy issues and priorities
- ▶ Elections are robustly contested among member councils
- ▶ Member councils actively consider the value of their contribution to regional leadership on Basin related issues
- ▶ Nominations are strongly supported by delegates' member councils
- ▶ Member councils provide resources to support the Chair
- ▶ All members are engaged, connected and fully informed
- ▶ A balanced mix of local government representative (councillor) and professional (officer) delegates
- ▶ Membership income reaches \$300,000
- ▶ Every region achieves 100% financial participation of the municipalities in their region
- ▶ Resolutions of the regions reflect and are supported by the position and or policies of member councils
- ▶ Appoint an interim Chairing council for regions 11 and 12
- ▶ Well lead, compliant region within 12 months of the appointment of an interim Chair
- ▶ Consistent and timely delivery of approved messaging, communication and information sharing

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To create a shared understanding of competing priorities across the regions

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Conduct Bi-Monthly meeting of the Regional Chairs - 'Council of Regional Chairs'
- ▶ Development of a regional issues map

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Executive records
- ▶ Adoption of the Issues Map

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3:

Communicate effectively inter-regionally

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Conduct bi-monthly meetings of the region Chairs
- ▶ Effective use of social media
- ▶ Distinguish the role of the regional chair, and the responsibilities as board members
- ▶ Develop an Issues Map for the Basin regions that describes the range of needs and concerns across the different municipalities and provides a foundation for informed discussion and shared understanding
- ▶ Investment in technology to ensure high-quality distance-conferencing across and outside the Basin

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Adoption of bi-monthly Board, and Council of Regional Chairs meetings
- ▶ Implementation of seamless video conferencing for whole of Board/Council of Regional Chairs meeting





GOAL: TO INFLUENCE THE POLICIES OF GOVERNMENT

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

To effectively advocate on behalf of our members

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Empower and support regions to be more active in their advocacy
- ▶ Maintain detailed and accurate minutes of region meetings
- ▶ Rely on the adopted position, reports and professional expertise of member councils in forming advocacy positions and priorities
- ▶ Demonstrate clear accountability and veracity of advocacy positions and priorities

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Region Chairs meet regularly with state and federal members of parliament
- ▶ Publication of the Minutes of Region meetings
- ▶ Minutes are supported by the reports and policies of member councils
- ▶ Publication of the minutes of the Council of Regional Chairs

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To inform the review of social and economic impacts of the Basin Plan due to be completed by the MDBA 2017

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Advocate for suitably qualified technical expert to partner with the MDBA and the MDA to develop a rigorous and repeatable Basin Plan evaluation framework and methodology that can distinguish the one-off and short term impacts from the underlying performance and structural impacts of the Plan

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #3:

To provide policy direction to inform the implementation of the SDL Adjustment Mechanism

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #4:

To participate in the finalisation of the Northern Basin Review

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #5:

To work with consultants and researchers to investigate the possibilities of improving Plan outcomes

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Partner with universities and other sources of research and technical expertise
- ▶ Deliver a successful Annual National Conference

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ The application of new thinking from experiences gained informs new policy in Basin management practices
- ▶ Conference delivers a clear set of advocacy priorities for the year ahead, informed by the regions and resolved by the members through an accountable and clear voting framework

GOAL: BE A STRONG, VIABLE, SELF-SUSTAINING ORGANISATION

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #1:

To apply always the principals of good governance

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ To ensure regulatory compliance
- ▶ Focus on our core purpose and areas of expertise

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Regular, compliant process and financial audits
- ▶ Distribute the required changes in a new draft Constitution for consultation with the regions in readiness for the next AGM
- ▶ Every action by the MDA aligns to the purpose of the organisation

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE #2:

To attract and retain diversity of thought, opinion, experience and representation

PRINCIPLES AND ACTIONS:

- ▶ Manage for effective succession
- ▶ Identify and address any barriers to the equal participation of women

To understand and be informed by indigenous experience, expertise and perspectives

INDICATIONS:

- ▶ Every region has a strong executive with identified successors developing the skills and experience required to lead the region
- ▶ Board adopts a plan for succession of the Chief Executive Officer
- ▶ Equal gender representation across the staff, board and regions
- ▶ Every region has an MOU with, or membership of local indigenous community representative organisation

4 OUR FINANCIAL BASE

Current annual membership income stands at approximately \$200,000, enabling the MDA to deliver lean but effective representation and to ensure regulatory compliance.

It is imperative that memberships grow, in order to deliver better informed and empowered representation across the regions.

With growth in memberships comes an increase in revenue, allowing for further investment in delivering on the purpose of the organisation.

The current target is to grow annual membership income to \$220,000 by 2017, \$250,000 by 2018 and \$290,000 by 2019.

The role of Regional Chair provides further resources through secretariat support.

This support leverages membership income and is consistent with the MDA's current strategy to provide lean, focused representative advocacy.





COUNCIL MEMBERSHIP COST



\$0.27 plus GST per head of population
capped at \$6,000.00 plus GST

ie: 100,000 popl (last ABS Census)

~~-\$27,0000.00~~

Total cost \$6,600.00

* Membership fees may be reviewed from time to time

5 CONCLUSION

In order to succeed in what is an imperative purpose, we must constantly respond to the needs of our members. We must deliver value, and ensure our strategy is clear, focused and fit to carry us forward into a challenging and dynamic future.

To be effective, our strategy has to be well communicated. It has to be a shared vision. And it must be understood.

But most of all, this strategy has to inspire.

Recognising this, the Board of Management representing its respective communities and regions; the executive team, and a skilled and experienced facilitator met in Echuca Victoria, February 2016.

Strategy and governance is a team activity.

The Echuca meeting generated creative discussions that encouraged innovation and challenged the status quo.

From those discussions, including invited presentations and submissions from stakeholders, the current plan of action emerged.





Murray Darling Association Inc. Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Incorporated under the Association's Incorporation Act
1984 NSW Registered number Y 40317-47

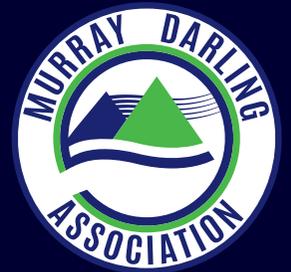
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1. BACKGROUND

The Murray Darling Association (MDA) is a membership based peak representative organisation representing local government and communities across the Murray Darling Basin. The Basin covers 14 percent of the land mass of Australia. There are 181 local government organisations across the Basin who derive their wellbeing from the resources of the Basin. Eighty-two of these organisations are currently members of the MDA.

In 2012, the Murray Darling Basin Plan came into effect, with a planned staged implementation of major reforms over a 12-year period. The Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA) has been tasked with the implementation of the Plan.

The MDA supports the purpose of and need for the Basin Plan, while noting that the Plan will benefit from the application of adaptive management principles and practices. In its Strategic Plan (2016-19), the MDA commits to:

“work constructively with the MDBA, and other stakeholders using our collective engagement and influence for the overall benefit of the Murray Darling Basin and the communities reliant upon its resources, via the implementation of the basin plan.”

In order for the Basin Plan to adapt effectively, the impacts of the implementation of the Basin Plan must be properly understood.

The MDA hears from its members, individuals, local government and business communities that they are experiencing significant impacts to their towns, their lives and their livelihoods. These impacts are largely attributed to the Basin Plan, with acknowledgment that some other factors may be contributory.

Members and stakeholders alike are frustrated by the lack of consistent, rigorous and repeatable monitoring and evaluation of the social and economic impacts of the Plan, and consequent gaps in any efforts to mitigate and address negative impacts, and to identify and effectively communicate positive impacts.

WHAT IS NEEDED?

In order to address the concerns of its members and ensure that the Plan delivers the best outcomes for the Basin communities, the MDA aims to develop a rigorous and repeatable Basin Plan impacts evaluation framework and methodology against which the social and economic impacts of the plan can be measured and assessed. The MDA has stipulated that such an assessment tool must be able to identify and distinguish short term, unrelated, and one-off impacts from the underlying performance of the Plan.

Through this assessment tool, the MDA aims to:

- identify social and economic impacts to rural and regional communities as a result of the Basin Plan;
- distinguish short term and one off impacts from the underlying performance of the Basin Plan;
- identify and develop targeted solutions;

- enable better region-wide decision making and the development of regional solutions;
- identify and clarify stakeholder responsibility;
- strengthen the credibility and efficacy of its advocacy through evidence based decision making; and

2. OBJECTIVES

The two key objectives of this project are:

1. To develop a rigorous and repeatable Basin Plan impacts evaluation framework and methodology that can distinguish the one-off and short term impacts (on communities) from the underlying performance and structural impacts of the Plan. Fundamental to this objective is the production of a consistent set of evaluative data across the twelve Basin regions.
2. To implement the evaluation framework and methodology developed in 1 above at a regional level:
 - a. to capture the required regional data;
 - b. to interpret the data; and
 - c. to produce user friendly reporting which provides the information required to improve decision making, to identify problems and to shape regional solutions to mitigate and address impacts being experienced.

3. AUDIENCE

The audience for the project outputs will be:

- MDA members
- Local government
- Murray Darling Basin Authority
- State and Federal Government departments and agencies
- Industry groups
- Agricultural primary and secondary producers
- Rural and regional communities

4. BENEFITS

The Basin Plan has been criticised for giving greater weight to the delivery of environmental benefits without fully understanding the social and economic impacts of the implementation of the Plan across Basin communities.

Similarly, the Murray Darling Basin Authority is often criticised for not providing adequate monitoring, evaluation and review of the social and economic impacts of the Basin Plan. This challenge is compounded by claims of bias often made in response to positive case studies presented by the Authority.

A rigorous and repeatable impacts evaluation framework, able to capture both qualitative and quantitative data, will provide a consistent and comprehensive assessment tool for use by all levels of government; communities; responsible authorities; industries and other stakeholder groups.

The evaluation framework will

- Be available for use by all levels of government, community groups, and the Authority.
- Deliver data and findings in a consistent format across diverse communities and circumstances.
- Deliver data and findings free of any perception of bias.
- Identify and collate data in a consistent manner to identify and understand the adverse and the positive impacts of the Basin Plan on local communities and regions.
- Undertake assessment and information gathering in a structured, rigorous and repeatable way.
- Clearly identify where changes within communities are attributable to non-Basin Plan related factors.
- Develop evidenced based advocacy and structural reform strategies to mitigate adverse impacts.
- Provide independent evidence based context for the identification and presentation of positive impacts attributable to the implementation of the Basin Plan.
- Assist in strengthening the relationship between the Murray Darling Basin Authority and Basin communities.

These are significant benefits that will provide evidence based data upon which communities and the responsible authorities can build shared understandings and better relationships as the implementation of the Basin Plan progresses.

5. BUDGET AND FUNDING

COST

The proposed budget for the project is \$445,000.00 (excluding GST). The project tasks are outlined in the table below.

Project tasks	Cost (excl GST)
Stage 1: Build a profile of the key social and economic characteristics in each region of the MDA	\$71,200
Stage 1: Develop and evaluate a list of economic and social indicators as well as options for sourcing data	\$45,000
Stage 1: Conduct meetings with the broader regional reference groups	\$47,900
Stage 2: Develop detailed data collection methodology	\$34,800
Stage 2: Develop reporting template / specification for online options	\$47,900
Stage 3: MDA membership engagement to identify a single Pilot region	\$18,500
Stage 4: Develop customised Implementation Plan	\$15,000
Stage 5: Execute Pilot implementation and report	\$64,000
Stage 5: Evaluate and review framework. Revise if required	\$17,500
Project Management & Quality Assurance	\$64,000
Contingency	\$74,200
Sub Total	\$500,000
GST	\$50,000
Total including GST	\$550,000

FUNDING

Funding will be sought from all levels of government, shared equally across all Basin states – ensuring maximum buy-in, community engagement and ownership of the results.

The additional in-kind and non-cash contribution by local government including contribution of data, technical expertise, and general support across the project is estimated to be in excess of \$120,000.00.

Proposed funding model	Cost (excl GST)
Local Govt - LGA-SA	\$20,000
Local Govt - LGAQ	\$20,000
Local Govt - LGNSW	\$20,000
Local Govt - MAV	\$20,000
Local Govt - MDA	\$10,000
Local Government Contribution	\$90,000
State government - Qld Dept Natural Resources and Mines	\$55,000
State government - NSW Dept Lands and Water	\$55,000
State government - Victoria Dept Environment Land Water and Planning	\$55,000
State government - SA Dept Environment Water & Natural Resources	\$55,000
State Government Contribution	\$220,000
Federal Govt - Dept Water Resources and Ag	\$140,000
Federal Govt - Dept Environment	\$50,000
Federal Government Contribution	\$190,000
Sub Total	\$500,000
GST	\$50,000
Total including GST	\$550,000

TIMEFRAME

The project will take approximately 48-60 weeks. Targeted commencement date is October 2016, subject to securing the funding.

6. PROJECT STAGES

The recommended project stages are outlined below.

Project Stage	Expected outcomes
1. Develop evaluation framework	Approved evaluation framework
2. Develop generic implementation methodology	Approved implementation methodology
3. Promote to MDA membership to identify a single Pilot region	Secured interest in framework implementation in a single region
4. Plan implementation of framework in the Pilot region	Customised implementation plan
5. Execute Pilot implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Draft regional evaluation report • Feedback from regional stakeholders • Revision of framework if necessary • Final regional evaluation report • Development of actionable recommendations • Decisions made and solutions developed are informed by the Evaluation report

It is expected that once the Pilot implementation has been completed and assessed, implementation will extend to other regions.

7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Indicators of social and economic impacts will need to be determined and confirmed through consultation with regional stakeholders, therefore, active stakeholder engagement will be required and encouraged throughout the entire project.

The following mechanisms for engagement are recommended:

1. Steering Committee for the project to include:
 - a. MDA Executive + two or three Regional Chairs
 - b. Ministerial Council appointed representative
 - c. Dept Land Water and Ag appointed representative
 - d. Western Research Institute (WRI) / Institute of Land, Water and Society (ILWS)
– Charles Sturt University

All project stages

2. Broader reference group to be involved in the process of selecting the indicators to capture / measure. The reference group could include:
 - a. MDA chairs from every region
 - b. MDBA representatives
 - c. Representative from Regional Wellbeing Survey authors (Canberra University)
 - d. Representative from CSU / Institute of Land, Water and Society (ILWS)
 - e. Representative from Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW)
 - f. Representatives of Local Government / Regional Business Chambers
 - g. Representatives of the Indigenous communities across the regions
 - h. Key local, state and federal Government representatives
 - i. Local champions with relevant expertise

By involving a broader reference group, we'd hope to build ownership and credibility, and therefore improve the chances that the framework will be utilised in a meaningful way.

Project stage 1

3. Regional reference groups, to be determined as the framework is implemented at a regional level.

Project stages 4 and 5

8. KEY ISSUES FOR INVESTIGATION

Impacts on communities can be categorised as:

- Social
- Cultural (linked to social)
- Economic
- Physical (infrastructure)
- Environmental (natural / systemic / built)

Social and **cultural** impacts are very closely linked. There is a considerable body of work capturing community sentiment, especially through the Regional Wellbeing Survey (RWS). The MDA supports the efforts of the RWS to capture regional sentiment, however, notes some significant limitations in terms of the hard data that it provides on change occurring in the communities.

Feedback from the Basin communities suggests that they want to understand what the impacts look like and what the outcomes are for rural and regional communities, small towns and local government in terms of community structure, cohesion and function, in order to develop effective and targeted solutions.

The **economic** indicators selected for monitoring by the MDBA have focused primarily on agricultural impacts with limited extension to other areas of industry or flow-on impacts. Much of the data assessed is sourced from the ABARES¹ farm survey, with in-depth qualitative interviews also undertaken with farmers across the Basin.

Feedback from the Basin communities suggests that they want to better understand:

- ***the flow-on impacts of reduced agricultural production, on agricultural service providers and the overall economy; and***
- ***changes in non-agricultural industry which may be expected to take the place of agriculture as the key sector in some communities.***

An understanding of the **physical** impacts occurring in the Basin, in the form of the hard infrastructure available to communities, will likely be uncovered through discussions of the consequences of social and economic impacts.

Considerable work has been undertaken to date or is underway to capture measures of **environmental** impact across the Basin communities. The MDBA framework for evaluating environmental change is comprehensive and sits outside the scope of this project.

In response to the concerns raised by its members, in 2014 the MDA partnered with the MDBA to assess the information available from local government organisations within the

¹ Australian Bureau of Agricultural and Resource Economics and Sciences

Basin to assist the MDBA to analyse the trends and drivers of economic change over time. The project identified that local government does collect information that is useful to the ongoing monitoring of impacts, however, there is a lack of consistency of information across jurisdictions and much of the information collected does not directly align to the questions that need to be answered.

For the reasons identified above, the evaluation framework to be developed will focus on the Social and Economic dimensions of impact. It will seek to capture both positive and negative impacts being experienced; and to identify the degree of linkage of the impacts to the Basin Plan, i.e. it will seek to distinguish short term, unrelated, and one-off impacts from the underlying impacts of the Plan.

The selection of the specific indicators to be captured is the subject of Stage 1 of the project and the types of information that will be considered in each dimension are described in the tables overleaf.

ECONOMIC INDICATORS

The focus of data collection for this dimension is to source metrics that can track changes occurring in industry and economic health across the Basin, as well as the probable causes of the changes occurring.

Impact area	Potential indicators
Overall community and business confidence	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • development applications • construction certificates • land valuations • estimates of business confidence (survey) • employment data
Farm / agricultural industry viability	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • profitability • farm sales and trends • water availability and pricing (affordability) across irrigation districts, including trends in the cost of water delivery • overall productivity levels – dairy, fruits etc. • private investment in irrigation and other infrastructure • trends in farming practice (i.e. moves from cropping to permanent plantings; food to fibre etc.) • intergenerational farming trends (succession) • exit statistics
Other industry	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • growth and decline in different industry sectors • linkages to other sectors and the associated flow-ons • productivity
Generic business	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • constraints / barriers to running your business in the community (hard / soft infrastructure issues, population and skills issues) • support for business innovation / entrepreneurship in the community
Linkages to the MDBP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has the MDBP had any impact on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ investment in an industry ○ profit levels ○ employment • Has the MDBP had any effect on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ industry diversity in the community ○ overall business confidence in the community ○ employment opportunities in the community ○ income levels across the community

SOCIAL INDICATORS

The focus of data collection for this dimension is to source metrics that can be used to identify the:

- impacts and outcomes of specific social conditions; and
- the probable causes of the specific social conditions.

Key areas of concern have been selected for exploration from the definition below:

By "social impacts" we mean the consequences to human populations of any public or private actions that alter the ways in which people live, work, play, relate to one another, organize to meet their needs and generally cope as members of society. The term also includes cultural impacts involving changes to the norms, values, and beliefs that guide and rationalize their cognition of themselves and their society.²

The objective will be to uncover impacts on and outcomes for rural and regional communities, small towns and local government.

Many of the potential indicators listed could easily fall into a number of categories.

Impact area	Potential indicators
The ways in which people live	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • demographic changes and the consequences of in / out migration on the community • Meeting aged care needs • Estimates of health and community wellbeing
The ways in which people work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Unemployment • Ability to find enough hours of work • Ability to find work that matches my skills and education • Ability to fit work around other life priorities • Noticeable changes to business income (e.g. are people spending more, less or about the same locally?) • For those entirely or partially dependent on agricultural conditions for work/income: ability to diversify • Retirement (affordability)
The ways in which people and communities organise to meet their needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Key people leaving the community/new arrivals taking on leadership roles etc. • Ongoing viability of schools (attracting/retaining staff, numbers of students etc.) • Having somewhere to get help/support if life suddenly became very difficult (e.g., death of spouse, serious illness, loss of employment) • Access to welfare services • Access to specific health services • Level of unpaid care being performed

² Interorganizational Committee on Principles and Guidelines for Social Impact Assessment, (2003). Principles and Guidelines for Social Impact Assessment in the USA. *Impact Assessment & Project Appraisal* 21(3), 233-270.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How often/far people have to travel to necessary services • Availability of key government services (e.g. Medicare, Centrelink) • Availability of Not-for-Profit welfare • Homelessness / access to housing • Level of volunteering
The ways in which people think of their society	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Crime and safety profile including family violence and other forms of 'less visible' crime/safety issues, changes in types of crime/safety issues occurring • Mental health and social wellbeing – as a direct response to events and environmental circumstances.
Linkages to the MDBP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What are the most significant changes that have occurred in a community (positive and negative) over the last few years? • What have been the major drivers of these changes? • What are the most significant issues facing a community? • What have been the major causes of these issues?

RELATED NEED

A related project to map stakeholder, departmental and agency responsibilities specifically in the water delivery and management sector across the Basin and its various jurisdictions will be undertaken separately. The output of this project will be a navigable map of agencies and stakeholders that will equip community members to efficiently access the appropriate people and information as required.

9. PROJECT STEPS

The expected project steps for Stages 1 and 2 are outlined below.

STAGE 1: DEVELOP EVALUATION FRAMEWORK

The aim of this framework is to produce meaningful information that can be assessed at regular intervals to inform decision making and solution development.

The basis for developing the framework will be analysis performed according to the MDA regional structure, however, it is expected that the framework could be implemented at a much lower level.

The proposed project steps are outlined below.

1. Establish Steering Committee for the project to include:
 - a. MDA Executive + two or three member Councils
 - b. MDBA representative – 1 x Executive and 1 x Board
 - c. Western Research Institute
 - d. Institute of Land, Water and Society (ILWS) – Charles Sturt University

2. Build a profile of the key social and economic characteristics in each region of the MDA.

This task will involve:

- a. Identifying and briefly reviewing existing studies that have either described the social and economic characteristics of regions across the Basin, or have attempted to document the impacts of the Basin Plan; and determining the overall gaps in knowledge that exist.
- b. Collating data from a range of additional current sources, which may include:
 - Regional Wellbeing Survey
 - SEIFA index data
 - ABS Census data relating to social and economic conditions
 - ATO data
 - Data held by Local Governments
 - Health data
 - Population data and projections
 - Regional economic data
 - Regional agricultural production data
 - WRI data that has identified industrial change occurring at the SA4 level regionally

3. Develop a list of economic and social indicators along with options for sourcing the data either from secondary or from primary sources. This task will involve:
 - a. Developing a list of indicators
 - b. Evaluating the list of indicators by asking the following questions:
 - How useful is the data (what does it tell us)? Perhaps identify specific examples of what it can tell us.
 - How often is the data published or how often would it be collected?
 - Is the data consistent across state boundaries?
 - How costly will it be to obtain (i.e. will this require a costly household survey)?
 - Is the data a useful complement to information already being captured, does it fill a gap in our knowledge, or does it replicate information we already have?
 - How reputable / credible is the data?
 - How are outcomes for this indicator linked to the Basin Plan, if at all? (or how can we assess the linkage?)
 - c. Iterative discussion with the Steering Committee to identify focus areas for measurement in the social and economic dimensions, to rationalise to a subset that they think will meet their needs, and that they would like to take to a broader reference group for discussion and eventual selection of indicators.
4. Conduct meetings with the broader regional reference group. The aim of these meetings will be to:
 - a. explain the objectives of the project;
 - b. discuss the indicators for consideration and gain consensus on which ones to collect / measure; and
 - c. outline the process going forward, to develop the framework and the eventual outputs of the framework.

By involving a broader reference group, we'd hope to build ownership and credibility, and therefore improve the chances that the framework will be utilised in a meaningful way.

The output of this task will be a finalised list of indicators to be collected / measured including data sources.

STAGE 2: DEVELOP GENERIC IMPLEMENTATION METHODOLOGY & REPORT TEMPLATE

This stage develops a generic methodology for collecting and analysing the data to produce usable information. It is expected that this generic methodology will be customised for each region in which it is applied.

The proposed project steps are outlined below.

1. Develop a detailed data collection methodology, including:
 - a. For primary data: sampling methodology, target interest groups, key stakeholders, mode of survey / interview, questionnaire / interview guidelines, analysis needs, resourcing required, cost.
 - b. For secondary data: data sources, timing of data collection, analysis needs, resourcing required, cost.
 - c. Data collection schedule.
 - d. Development of specifications for a data repository / portal to house the data collected, such that it is accessible to the MDA community and can be used to fulfil a range of needs. Extending the use of the data collected will increase the returns on the initial investment.
2. Develop a reporting template which will identify:
 - a. how the data elements captured will be assessed to formulate overall findings for each region;
 - b. how recommendations will be developed; and
 - c. how the information will be presented.

NEXT STEPS

Once stages 1 and 2 of the project are complete, the MDA will be in a position to test the framework through implementation in a pilot region. Conducting a pilot will allow the project steering committee and regional stakeholders to:

- assess the value of data captured; and
- allow for refinement to the framework to optimise processes going forward.

It is expected that this process will deliver an evaluation framework that is pragmatic and repeatable; and produces meaningful data to inform the decision making process.

10. PROJECT PROPOSAL

The MDA will partner with the Western Research Institute (WRI) to undertake the research components outlined in stages 1 and 2 of the Project Terms of Reference.

Established in 1998, the Western Research Institute (WRI) is a not-for-profit think-tank based in regional Australia which conducts social and economic research to support better decision-making and stronger investment in sustainable regional development. WRI also provides a social and economic research consultancy services to support sound infrastructure investments, successful grant applications, business case development, cost-benefit analysis, economic impact analysis and program evaluations.

Project management

Teleconferences and face to face meetings with the steering committee will be scheduled at important project junctures as follows:

Throughout the project, regular email and telephone communications will be used to keep both the MDA project team and the steering committee up to date on project progress.

Steering Committee responsibilities

Throughout the project, the steering committee will:

- approve the project plan and schedule;
- provide advice on areas of focus for indicator development;
- approve final list of indicators to be discussed with broader reference group;
- approve materials to be presented to broader reference group;
- provide comment on the draft evaluation framework, including data collection methodology and planned reporting outputs; and
- approve the final evaluation framework, including data collection methodology and planned reporting outputs.

Presentations to the broader reference group

- WRI has planned to hold a maximum of two meetings with the broader reference group.
- Meetings will be scheduled to align to two of the regular face to face meetings that MDA holds with its members annually.
- Meetings will be held in both the north and south of the Basin in order to enable and encourage attendance from all MDA regions. For costing purposes, tentative locations have been selected as Echuca, VIC and Moree, NSW.
- There may be a need to provide additional materials and opportunity for discussion through regular monthly meetings with members, held through video-conference.

DELIVERABLES

The deliverables from each stage of the project are outlined below.

Stage 1	A finalised list of indicators to be collected / measured including data sources.
Stage 2	Draft and final evaluation framework, including data collection methodology and planned reporting outputs.
Stage 3	Promote to MDA membership to identify a single Pilot region
Stage 4	Customised implementation plan
Stage 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Execute Pilot implementation <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Draft regional evaluation report ○ Feedback from regional stakeholders ○ Revision of framework if necessary ○ Final regional evaluation report ○ Development of actionable recommendations ○ Decisions made and solutions developed are informed by the Evaluation report

The MDA will:

- manage stakeholder engagement
- invite suitable representatives to sit on the steering committee;
- invite suitable stakeholders and experts to join the broader reference group;
- facilitate the meetings with the broader reference group;
- manage the collection of feedback from members of the broader reference group in a reasonable timeframe; and
- make available any reports of existing studies on Basin Plan impacts or changes occurring across the Basin that the organisation holds.

EXPERIENCE AND CAPABILITY

The Murray Darling Association is a membership-based peak representative organisation representing local government and communities across the Murray Darling Basin.

Established in 1944, the MDA has a strong history steeped in the traditions and achievements of local government, working closely with communities and all levels of government to ensure the communities affected by the decisions of state and federal government have a clear and articulate voice at the table, informing the direction and realising the impact of those decisions.

Western Research Institute has operated for over 17 years, providing social and economic analysis with a particular focus on regional areas. Relevant experience is described below.

Evaluation projects:

Evaluation is an important segment of WRI's business, with key staff who are members of the Australasian Evaluation Society. WRI has experience across a broad range of research methods and is able to customise methodologies to develop evaluation solutions that are both meaningful and workable. The results have been used to pursue funding opportunities and to assist with key operating decisions.

WRI has conducted several evaluation studies over the past ten years. More recent studies have included:

- Evaluation of the Low Income Energy Efficiency Program, a trial program funded by the Australian Government, Department of Industry, Innovation and Science - Skillset, 2013-2016;
- Evaluation of TAFE NSW Alternative Pathways Program – TAFE Western, 2010-2013; and
- Evaluation of the Climate Adaptation local capacity building and community education program, funded by the NSW Environmental Trust – Central NSW Councils, 2009-2012.

Projects related to the agricultural sector:

- Measuring the Economic Contribution of the Fishing Sector in NSW - University of Wollongong, 2014-2015;
- Murray-Murrumbidgee Economic Profile and Opportunities – NSW Department of Planning and Environment. This study required an assessment of industry sector opportunities through secondary data analysis and in-depth interviews with stakeholders, 2014.
- RDA Orana Profile and Opportunities - RDA Orana. This study required an assessment of industry sector opportunities through secondary data analysis and in-depth interviews with stakeholders, 2013.
- Dubbo Regional Livestock Market Upgrade - Dubbo City Council. This study required an economic appraisal and cost benefit analysis of a proposed upgrade to DRLM, 2013;
- Contribution of the red meat processing sector to the state and national economies - Australian Meat Processors Corporation, 2012.
- Value of Irrigated Agriculture to the Lachlan Valley - Lachlan Valley Water, 2011;
- Westpac / Charles Sturt University Agribusiness Index – a national survey of some 1300 agribusinesses which tracked the performance of the agribusiness sector on a quarterly basis, 2006-2011;
- Impacts of the live cattle trade on the Queensland Beef industry – WRI was a contributor to this report produced in 2010;
- Cotton Consultants surveys - Cotton Consultants Australia Inc. Surveys of consultants and growers were used to determine product usage, forecasts of product requirements and indicators of product usage trends, 2007-2008;
- Estimating the economic impact of the drought on the Australian Pork industry - Australian Pork Limited. This study included an assessment of structural change, supply chain analysis and economic modelling, 2007.

Other relevant studies:

- Community impact assessment – Bland Shire Council, 2015;
- Community impact assessment – Junee Shire Council, 2014;
- Assessment of CareWest's 4C Project for NSRF funding application – CareWest, 2014;
- Demand Assessment Survey – United Protestant Association, 2014;
- Assessment of Maitland City Council's CBD revitalisation for Resources for Regions funding application – Maitland City Council, 2014;
- Assessment of Wellington Council's CBD revitalisation and Wellington Caves Tourist Park development for Cobbora Transition Fund application – Wellington Council, 2014;
- Sealing the Menindee Pooncarie Road – Economic Impact Assessment and Cost Benefit Analysis – Central Darling Shire Council, 2013;
- Socio-economic report for temporary accommodation village in Singleton (2013) Gulgong (2011) – The MAC Services Group, 2011-2013;
- Economic Impact and Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Proposed Expansion and Upgrade to Orange Regional Airport – Orange City Council, 2012;
- Economic Impact and Cost-Benefit Analysis of the Proposed Regional Centre for Athletics – Dubbo City Council, 2011;

PROJECT TEAM

Technical elements of the research methodology and framework development will be led by the Western Research Institute, building on existing partnerships with the Institute of Land and Water Research within the Charles Sturt University.

Community engagement, content direction and project delivery will be led by the Murray Darling Association.

Ms Danielle Ranshaw – Senior Research Consultant

BEc&Fin UNSW

Danielle is an experienced researcher, having worked with WRI for nine years. During this time she has been involved in all facets of research project work and has taken on a leadership role managing research output. More recently she led the organisation as CEO for just over two years, before stepping back to a senior research position in 2016.

Danielle's areas of expertise include evaluation, survey development, data analysis, in-depth interview, stakeholder consultation, focus group facilitation, project management and client presentation. She joined WRI having several years' experience as a project manager within the information technology sector. Additionally, Danielle has extensive experience in performance planning and review, report writing and project planning.

Danielle is currently a member of the Australasian Evaluation Society and has considerable experience in developing monitoring and evaluation frameworks, having completed both large scale and small evaluations for organisations in the Central West of NSW. She is also enrolled in postgraduate study related to community engagement work.

Professor Max Finlayson

Director of the Institute for Land, Water and Society – Charles Sturt University

Professor Finlayson is the Director of the Institute for Land, Water and Society at CSU. He is an internationally renowned wetland ecologist with extensive experience internationally in water pollution, mining and agricultural impacts, invasive species, climate change, and human well-being and wetlands. He has participated in global assessments such as those conducted by the Intergovernmental Panel for Climate Change, the Millennium Ecosystem Assessment, and the Global Environment Outlook 4 & 5 (UNEP).

Ms Jenni Greig

Jenni Greig is a social researcher with over a decade of experience. Jenni has a background in Psychology, and has been part of research teams investigating a wide range of aspects of life in regional and rural Australia, including drivers of participation in environmental incentive programs; communicating with farmers and other landholders; and the aged care sector. She has considerable experience in qualitative and quantitative research design, data collection and analysis, as well as project administration. Jenni has also been lecturing in Psychology at Charles Sturt University since 2007. Jenni's PhD thesis on social impact assessment in regional communities was accepted in early 2016.

Ms Emma Bradbury

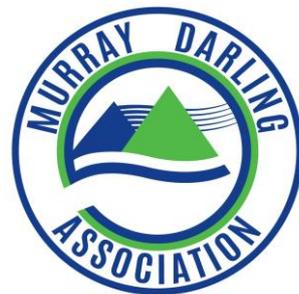
B.Soc Sci, Grad.Dip Ed, MAICD

Emma is the Chief Executive Officer of the Murray Darling Association, and is experienced in project management, regional engagement, and has strong connections with communities across the Basin.

In 2014 the MDA partnered with the MDBA in a joint project focused on collecting and assessing the suitability of information available from local government organisations within the Basin to assist the MDBA to analyse the trends and drivers of economic change over time as the Basin Plan is implemented.

Other relevant work includes

- MDA submission to the 2014 Review of the *Water Act (2007)*
- MDA evidentiary submission to the 2015 Senate inquiry to the Review of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.
- Submission to Victorian review of Rural Land Use Strategy



Recommendations

Recommendation 1

3.53 The committee recommends that no further reductions in water entitlements occur until the Northern Basin review, and any subsequent assessments, have been completed.

3.54 The committee recommends that the review should also consider alternative means of water recovery, particularly in the Condamine-Balonne catchment, in order to minimise the economic and social impact of the Plan in the Northern Basin. This would include consideration of the following options:

- recovery of water upstream of Beardmore Dam;
- use of private storages to more efficiently store environmental water and reduce evapotranspiration (the sum of evaporation and plant transpiration) losses;
- implementation of environmental works and measures to more efficiently deliver environmental water to key environmental assets; and
- temporary trade of water to make best use of Commonwealth water assets when environmental needs have been met.

Recommendation 2

3.55 The committee recommends that the Murray-Darling Basin Authority, as part of its ongoing social and economic work, undertake and publish a thorough assessment of the estimated and actual social and economic impacts of the implementation of the Plan, including of pursuing the remaining water recovery for the Condamine-Balonne catchment and other similarly distressed areas.

Recommendation 3

3.68 The committee recommends that the MDBA address the existing over-recovery in the Macquarie Valley and other ‘terminal’ systems such as the Gwydir Valley, with a view to limiting recovery to amounts which address valley-specific environmental needs.

Recommendation 4

3.99 The committee recommends that federal and state governments examine options for securing Broken Hill's water supply as recommended by the Broken Hill City Council, including raising the trigger point for releases, and improving infrastructure and storage at Menindee Lakes.

Recommendation 5

3.100 The committee recommends that an environmental watering plan be developed for the Menindee Lakes, provided that Adelaide's water supply and that of South Australian irrigators and landholders dependent on the Murray, is secure (see paragraph 3.197).

Recommendation 6

3.143 The committee recommends the Commonwealth assume liability for damage to private property from environmental watering events, including to both landholders and third parties, except to parties who have given prior consent to such flooding.

Recommendation 7

3.144 The committee recommends that the MDBA and state governments address the issue of third party impacts from environmental watering events during the development of constraints proposals, and clearly communicate with landholders who are likely to be affected by such events.

Recommendation 8

3.146 The committee recommends that the MDBA review its communication methods, particularly with regard to projects still in development such constraints proposals, and improve its ability to incorporate the views of communities and landholders into decisions and reports.

Recommendation 9

3.179 The committee recommends the federal government work with the Victorian government to ensure adequate accountability and scrutiny of the Goulburn Murray Water Connections Project, by initiating a judicial inquiry into the operation of the Goulburn Murray Water Connections Project. Further, given the use of Commonwealth funds on the project, the committee recommends the Australian National Audit Office should consider an audit of the project.

Recommendation 10

3.200 The committee recommends the government evaluate the effect on irrigators and the environment of the SA government purchasing irrigation water on the water market while declining to use its desalination plant. The committee also recommends the government undertake a study of the cost of upgrading pipeline delivery of water to irrigators and livestock owners on both sides of the lower lakes.

Recommendation 11

3.274 The committee recommends that Bird Island be removed by the South Australian Government and MDBA to improve water flow through the Murray mouth.

Recommendation 12

3.275 The committee recommends the MDBA calculate the economic value of fresh water evaporated from the lower lakes.

Recommendation 13

3.277 The committee recommends the government undertake a detailed study to inform whether a reassessment of the Coorong's Ramsar listing from a fresh water system to an estuarine system is more appropriate.

Recommendation 14

3.284 The committee recommends the government undertake cost-benefit analyses of the following options for adapting the management of the Lower Lakes and Coorong, and their social, economic and environmental impacts throughout the basin:

- removing all of the barrages;
- removing some of the barrages;
- modifying some of the barrages (such as Tauwitchenie and Mundoo);
- allowing the ingress of salt water into the Lower Lakes during periods of low flow; and
- investigating the construction of an additional lock at a location above Lake Alexandrina, such as near Wellington, SA, either in concert with the above options or as a single change.

3.285 Should such analysis indicate that one or more of these leads to more positive social, economic and environmental outcomes than the current basin plan, the committee recommends the Plan be amended accordingly.

Recommendation 15

3.311 The committee recommends the government commission an independent feasibility and hydrology study into a connector between Lake Albert and the Coorong to assess the environmental and economic costs and benefits of the connector, and compare this to the current practice of lake cycling.

Recommendation 16

3.328 The committee recommends the government direct the Productivity Commission to investigate the value of foregone production and food processing due to reduced irrigation water under the Plan.

Recommendation 17

3.339 The committee recommends that the government assess the operation of the Snowy Mountains Hydro-electric Scheme to determine the priority of irrigation and energy production.

Recommendation 18

3.340 The committee recommends the operation of the scheme be assessed, and adjusted as required, to give more effect to social, economic and environmental considerations of local and downstream communities.

Recommendation 19

4.5 The committee recommends that the Commonwealth Government request the Productivity Commission to undertake a full cost-benefit analysis of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

Recommendation 20

4.22 The committee recommends that state governments make every effort to promote SDL Adjustment Mechanism projects in their jurisdiction to achieve the 650GL target.

Recommendation 21

4.35 The committee recommends that no further buybacks of water occur and that action to recover the additional 450GL of water through efficiency measures is delayed until the SDL Adjustment Mechanism target is met and the socio-economic impacts of water recovery to date are known.

Recommendation 22

4.81 The committee recommends that the government investigate the costs and benefits of a real-time national water trading register, and whether private platforms provide or can complement such arrangements.

Recommendation 23

4.112 The committee recommends that the government coordinate with the basin state governments to undertake a comprehensive assessment of carryover rules and regulations and investigate the potential for amendment of the rules.

Recommendation 24

4.125 The committee recommends the government assess, objectively value and publish data on the various uses of water in the Murray-Darling Basin.

Recommendation 25

4.150 The committee recommends that the government amend the Water Act 2007 to make clear the equal standing of economic, social and environmental needs and outcomes.

Recommendation 26

4.210 The committee recommends that the MDBA, Commonwealth Environment Water Holder and basin states conduct greater monitoring, objective evaluation and communication of environmental watering activities, and that the MDBA collate and publicly report this information.

Recommendation 27

4.212 The committee recommends that the government fund the expansion of the Commonwealth Environmental Water Holder's existing Long Term Intervention Monitoring Project to include more sites around the basin and provide greater monitoring and evaluation of basin environmental watering activities.

Recommendation 28

4.253 The committee recommends the Victorian and NSW governments, as operators of the relevant storages, implement measures to mitigate cold water pollution that is undermining recovery efforts of native fish.

Recommendation 29

4.254 The committee recommends the MDBA conduct a review of the impact of cold water releases on native fish and develop risk assessments and mitigation strategies to ensure that cold water releases do not impact on native fish.

Recommendation 30

4.279 The committee recommends that the MDBA work with basin state governments to investigate the efficiency and effectiveness of salt interception schemes and combine their use and other complementary measures to manage salinity in the basin.

Recommendation 31

4.280 The committee recommends the Commonwealth fund and facilitate accelerated work on the restoration of surface flows from the south-east of South Australia into the lower Coorong, and undertake a feasibility study into the potential for redirecting all existing drainage discharges from the South East into the Coorong.

Dissenting Report

Senator Nick Xenophon

1.1 I commend my colleague, Senator John Madigan, for being the primary driver of this inquiry being established – a review of the Murray Darling Basin Plan is of course welcome – given the incredible importance of the basin to the nation’s environmental health and economic wealth.

1.2 However, I cannot support many recommendations in the Chair’s report; in particular recommendations 12, 13, 14 and 21 are most problematic.

1.3 The basin plan evolved across a number of years under both Coalition and ALP Governments. It is not perfect, but the perfect should not be the enemy of the good.

1.4 I am a strong supporter of farming communities in my home State of South Australia. Those communities that rely on irrigation water from the Murray deserve both certainty and a healthy river system from which to draw their water. Environmental flows are essential to maintain the health of the river, both in terms of salinity and blue green algae, for instance.

1.5 The recommendations in the Chair’s report that discuss moving barrages, allowing ingress of salt water into the lake and an additional lock above lake Alexandrina would have disastrous environmental and social consequences for the lower regions of the Murray.

1.6 I note the submission of Professor Mike Young of the University of Adelaide to this Inquiry. He drew attention to the difference between “gross” take and “net” water use. He stated in his submission:

Investment in measures that improve the efficiency of water use makes sense IF AND ONLY IF this results in an increase in the “net” efficiency of water use. In particular, full account needs to be taken of the quantities of water that following irrigation pass through a root zone to an aquifer and/or drain back to a river.¹

1.7 There have been recent developments in respect of the MDBP that ought to be noted.

1.8 On 11 March 2016 the Murray Darling Basin Ministerial Council met in Melbourne to discuss how to progress the implementation of the Basin Plan.

1.9 A core aspect to the plan is the sustainable diversion limit (SDL) adjustment mechanism. The SDL adjustment mechanism is a key process for improving the socio-economic and environmental outcomes of the Basin Plan. During the meeting Ministers discussed the projects state governments are developing to implement the

1 Professor Michael Young, *Submission 348*, p. 1.

Plan, including supply measures. These are measures that deliver equivalent environmental outcomes using less water and are commonly referred to as ‘down water’ projects.

1.10 The projects accepted under the plan are backed by science and by protocols as to how that science is to be implemented. However, I understand there are concerns some states are developing down water projects which they claim will achieve environmentally equivalent outcomes, but these projects are not adhering to the scientific basis and protocols previously agreed to.

1.11 It is particularly important for South Australia’s river system that upstream states meet their end of the bargain when it comes to upholding the Murray Darling Basin Plan. Each of the states that are party to the plan set these rules. It was done so by consensus, based on the science and must not be undone.

1.12 Finally, of course, the plan must be subject to regular and robust scrutiny. However to undo the plan, as a number of the recommendations suggest, would be retrograde step – destructive to both the farmers and the environment.

Senator Nick Xenophon

Independent Senator for South Australia

Dissenting Report

Senator John Madigan

1.1 Deep suspicion remains across the Murray Darling Basin about the Murray Darling Basin Authority (MDBA), its operation and the perceived perfunctory nature of its attempts to liaise and listen to local communities.

1.2 Communities exhausted by challenging economic conditions, with dwindling farming and irrigation sectors, remain convinced the MDBA is proceeding on its own agenda while paying 'lip service' to consultation.

1.3 I note that in the 2011 House of Representatives Inquiry into the Guide to the Murray Darling Basin Plan, the committee was highly critical of the MDBA's community engagement program.

1.4 Additionally that same committee articulated concerns about the MDBA's modelling, assumptions and data gathering.

1.5 Four years later, local communities have given vent to similar complaints.

1.6 During the current Senate inquiry I saw little perception from communities across the Basin that the operations of the MDBA had changed in response to the first report.

1.7 Basin people are suspicious, frightened and angry about an organisation they see as all-powerful and non-responsive. I take seriously evidence that the MDBA's modelling has been proven wrong, that the organisation is not responsive to criticism and in some cases has forced constituents to resort to Freedom of Information requests to obtain data.

1.8 I remain deeply concerned that the MDBA is a well-funded and diverse bureaucracy dedicated to its own self-preservation with little real accountability to the government or the Parliament, and certainly not to the thousands of rural and regional Australians who are impacted by its operations and decisions.

1.9 I remain troubled that this organisation, like many government bureaucracies, is insincere in its pronouncements of regard for local expertise.

1.10 I see the Murray Darling Basin Plan as one of the largest negative man-made impactors on our farming communities in the history of this country. More significantly, much if not all of the negative impact of the MDBP is ignored by governments and ignored or rationalised by the authority.

1.11 Many witnesses were adamant that the Plan must be paused to undertake a more thorough and detailed stocktake of our water resources and their effective management. Others are more hesitant, saying such action would create additional uncertainty.

1.12 Water resource management is now exceedingly complex, controlled by a growing number of bureaucracies and administered by the Commonwealth and relevant state governments.

1.13 It's clear to many – and I share their view – the Plan is not working. The destructive impact on the farmers, irrigators and communities who live and work in our food bowl is considerable. Water is our most precious resource.

1.14 For the thousands who have been fighting this plan and this bureaucracy for years now, it will be a tragedy if this report is shelved without appropriate and clear government response and action.

1.15 Additionally I make the following recommendations.

Recommendation 1

1.16 The Commonwealth *Water Act 2007* must be amended to indisputably give equal balance to the triple bottom line i.e. social, economic and environmental values.

Recommendation 2

1.17 The *Water Act 2007* must be amended to remove reference to the 450GL and links to the Sustainable Diversion Adjustment mechanism. The \$1.77 billion must be redirected to meet other objectives arising from the Basin Plan.

Recommendation 3

1.18 We must review the MDBA's Regulatory Impact Statement (2012) to account for omissions and inclusion of relevant information evident in the implementation phase of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

Recommendation 4

1.19 We must amend/extend current timeframes and project eligibility for the Sustainable Diversion Limits (SDL) adjustment mechanism.

Recommendation 5

1.20 We must have an allowance within the scope of 650GL of SDL projects to enable adaptive management and the development of further project options to deliver environmental outcomes that may not be fully explored or developed prior to the June 2016 deadline.

Recommendation 6

1.21 The Murray Darling Basin Plan's focus on flow objectives to the Lower Lakes must be reviewed to avoid massive third party impacts (social, economic and environment) on Basin communities. The Plan must incorporate the physical realities of the Murray, Edward and Wakool and Goulburn river systems and acknowledge that the Murray Darling Basin Authority's proposed flow targets to the SA border are unachievable.

Recommendation 7

1.22 Federal, New South Wales, Victoria and South Australian governments should be encouraged to investigate the development of localised projects in South Australia to deliver environmental benefits for the Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth. Federal investments should be on the condition that SDL credits generated help offset the shared downstream targets for the Murray (971GL.) (The Coorong Connector should not be considered unless part of a broader package of measures.)

Recommendation 8

1.23 We need an independent investigation of the accountability, performance and independence of the MDBA with emphasis on the basis and validity of its conclusions and recommendations to government in the development and implementation of the Murray Darling Basin Plan.

Recommendation 9

1.24 The MDBA must be instructed and made accountable to facilitate open access and transparency on all of its models and assumptions used in decisions associated with the Plan.

Recommendation 10

1.25 The MDBA's roles, responsibilities and future functions must be reviewed and restructured to incorporate regional decisions in all aspects of the Basin Plan – social, economic, environment.

Recommendation 11

1.26 The Federal Government must cease acquisition of further productive water (except for strategic benefits which is agreed to by relevant parties) until there has been a full analysis of social and economic impacts, an evaluation of environmental benefits achieved with water already acquired and it is evident there will be no adverse third party impacts on irrigation and private property.

Recommendation 12

1.27 Federal and state governments must be completely transparent and ensure full consultation with affected parties and stakeholders on all Murray Darling Basin Plan implementation decisions. This includes the Sustainable Diversion Limits adjustment mechanism, the Constraints Management Strategy and any proposed river or storage dam operational changes to ensure decisions do not undermine the reliability of irrigation supplies or property rights of private landholders or cause detrimental environmental impacts.

Recommendation 13

1.28 The Constraints business cases must provide a realistic, compelling case, developed in full consultation with affected stakeholders, and establish that proposed measures will be achievable and will deliver the expected outcomes. The cases must provide a positive case for investment before any decisions to proceed are made.

Recommendation 14

1.29 Impacts on all upper tributary catchments must be acknowledged and investigated so that the focus is not only on the main stems of the Murray, Goulburn and Murrumbidgee rivers when delivering environmental flows.

Recommendation 15

1.30 Government agencies must clearly establish timing, frequency, duration and extent of proposed environmental flows in order for stakeholders to make informed decisions in the development of the business cases on constraints.

Recommendation 16

1.31 The MDBA must address how the Constraints Management Strategy can proceed considering Upper Goulburn Catchment landowners have refused to negotiate easements to mitigate flooding impacts, and the Federal and State governments have stated they will not forcibly acquire easements or intentionally flood private property without consent.

Recommendation 17

1.32 Federal and state governments must avoid manipulation of water markets or water use through references to high value crops or preferred industries.

Recommendation 18

1.33 I strongly object to overseas entities being permitted to trade in our water.

Recommendation 19

1.34 Monitoring and evaluation of the Basin plan and environmental flows must include both negative and positive impacts to enable full evaluations.

1.35 After this inquiry I remain steadfast in my belief and support of the people of the Murray Darling Basin. I admire their courage and creativity, their strength and fortitude in the face of enormous challenges. The future of this country is integral to their future. Much is riding on our ability to get things right.

Senator John Madigan

Independent Senator for Victoria

Lake Albert scoping study



Aerial view of Narrung Narrows opening to Lake Alexandrina

The Lake Albert Scoping Study will provide guidance on the future actions for managing Lake Albert water quality and the Narrung Narrows across varying climatic scenarios.

Lake Albert Scoping Study

The Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources (DEWNR), in partnership with the community, is undertaking a study into the future management of Lake Albert water quality and the Narrung Narrows.

Lake Albert lies to the south-east of Lake Alexandrina at the end of the River Murray. It is connected to Lake Alexandrina via a narrow channel known as the Narrung Narrows.

While Lake Albert is naturally saltier than Lake Alexandrina due to its shallower form and terminal nature, salinity in the lake increased as a result of the 2006-2010 drought. Since the drought, salinity levels have reduced but are still above the historical range of 1500-1800 EC.

The Lake Albert Scoping Study aims to:

- involve the local community and Ngarrindjeri in the investigation of potential management actions to help foster environmental and cultural stewardship of the area
- continue to inform, educate and engage with the community about building environmental resilience in the longer term to better cope with water level variability.

The 12-month study will run throughout 2013.

The Coorong, Lower Lakes and Murray Mouth (CLLMM) Recovery Project is a key component of South Australia's \$610 million Murray Futures program, funded by the Australian Government's Water for the Future initiative.

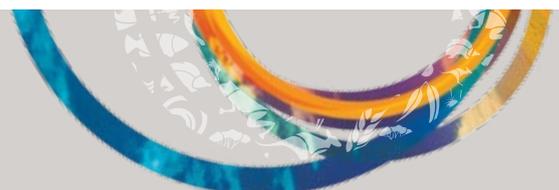
The CLLMM Recovery Project, is comprised of a suite of management actions that collectively aim to improve the ecological features of the CLLMM site to deliver a healthy, productive and resilient wetland of international importance, as well as to increase capacity, knowledge and understanding across communities. It is being delivered in collaboration with the community and Ngarrindjeri, the areas traditional owners.

History

During the recent drought, the water level in Lake Albert fell to half-a-metre below sea level (-0.5 m AHD).

Lake Albert was at risk of acidifying, so a bund was constructed in the channel between the lakes, in Narrung Narrows near the ferry. Water was pumped from Lake Alexandrina to Lake Albert to maintain the water level in Lake Albert and avoid acidification

In September 2010, significant volumes of water flowed into Lake Alexandrina and Narrung Bund was breached, allowing the fresh water into Lake Albert. The Bund was fully removed by July 2011.



Phases of the study

The Lake Albert Scoping Study involves four phases:

Phase one

Phase one included the collation and review of existing Lake Albert information and previous reports on management actions. A study into the wants and needs of the local community has also been completed.

Phase two

Phase two involved verifying potential management actions through modelling and engineering feasibility studies.

Phase three

Phase three considered the cost benefit of management actions, including timeframes for implementation, operation and maintenance, legislative requirements and environmental and social impacts.

Phase four

Phase four involves the preparation of a business case to seek funding for the implementation of the preferred management action(s).



Narrung Narrows



View from Point Malcolm lighthouse to Narrung Narrows

Further information

Department of Environment, Water and Natural Resources

T: (08) 8204 1910

www.naturalresources.sa.gov.au



Government
of South Australia



Australian Government

