



MINUTES

**72nd Annual General Meeting
Wednesday 26th October 2016
Dubbo RSL Club Resort**

1. WELCOME

1.1 Welcome from the National President, Cr David Thurley

Cr Thurley welcomed delegates to the 2016 AGM and declared the meeting open at 3.25pm.

In his welcome remarks, Cr Thurley noted that

We, the Board, are responsible to our members to carry forward the priorities you set. As members, we are all, in turn, responsible to the communities we represent to get the best value out of that membership. And the best value is achieved when we all work together. When we participate in our regions. And when we set the national agenda for the year ahead, as we are all doing here today.

1.2 Dr Christobel Ferguson, Department of Primary Industries – Water provided the opening address on behalf of NSW Minister for Primary Industries, Lands and Water, The Hon Niall Blair.

In her opening address, Dr Ferguson made the following points.

Acknowledgements, and passed on apologies of NSW Minister for Lands and Water Niall Blair, Noted the significance of this meeting in launching a new era of the Murray Darling Association

- *Significant inflows into parched waterways, winter crop damage from waterlogging and inundation, with the outlook for October to December indicates that wetter conditions are likely across most of NSW.*
- *Changes in water allocations which, DPI Water is carefully calculating.*
- *A conservative approach is taken to provide confidence to water users that orders can be met, while allocations are likely to rise further as irrigation water delivery provides space for further inflows over summer.*
- *As part of the Northern Basin Review, finding solutions and providing investment to increase agricultural and irrigation productivity and sustainability is a priority. The NSW Government advocates for a triple bottom line approach to the implementation of the Basin Plan. The NSW Government is committed to securing Broken Hill's long term water supply, with the Broken Hill pipeline solution the result of 19 possible project options after an extensive*

assessment by water, financial, engineering and infrastructure experts.

- The pipeline option also brings significant catchment-wide benefits for our northern and southern irrigation industries and is ingrained in our commitments under the Murray Darling Basin Plan.*
- Development of a one-stop water portal for intergovernmental stakeholders is a project aimed to efficiently and accurately capture information required to meet the Basin Plan reporting commitments in one location.*
- DPI committed to ensuring we meet the challenges of water management into the future.*
- Local government's commitment to moving with the changing landscape in a 'new era' is a testament to your dedication to supporting thriving communities, economic development and sustainable productivity.*

2. ATTENDANCE

2.1 Present

Cr David Thurley	Chairman, Region 1, National President
Cr Leigh Byron	Chairman, Region 2
Gerard Jose	Chairman, Region 4
Cr Barry Featherston	Chairman, Region 6, Vice President
Cr Peter Jamieson	Chairman, Region 7, Treasurer
Mayor Paul Maytom	Chairman, Region 9
Emma Bradbury	MDA Chief Executive Officer
Dr Christobel Ferguson	NSW Department of Primary Industries
Neil Andrew	Murray Darling Basin Authority
Andrew Sherman	Russell Kennedy Lawyers
Mick Callan	Environment & Waterways Alliance
Digby Jacobs	NSW Dept of Primary Industries, Water
Ashley Bland	Skillset Environment
Brad Ferris	Albury City Council
Greg Whorlow	Albury City Council
Cr Tony Quinn	Greater Hume Shire Council
Cr Terry Weston	Greater Hume Shire Council
Cr Colin Jones	Berrigan Shire Council
Cr Ross Bodie	Berrigan Shire Council
Simon Arkinstall	Murray River Council
Geoff Shand	Edward River Council
Sally Dye	Edward River Council
Lindsay Renwick	Edward River Council
Johann Rajaratnam	Greater Shepparton City Council
Don McPhee	Moira Shire Council
Peter Mansfield	Moira Shire Council
Marc Lon Ho Kee	Goulburn Murray Water
Claire Miller	Dairy Australia
The Hon Dr Sharman Stone	Murray Irrigation
Jenny Johnson	Individual
Cr Steve O'Halloran	Balranald Shire Council
Aaron Drenovski	Balranald Shire Council
Michael Boyd	Central Darling Shire Council
Cr Peter Hunter	Renmark Paringa Council

Naomi Prunckun	Renmark Paringa Council
Cr Adrian Sakko	Mid Murray Council
Ian Mann	Individual
Cr Michael Scott	Alexandrina Council
Cr Frank Tuckwell	Alexandrina Council
Cr Julie Barrie	Coorong District Council
Cr Vern Leng	Coorong District Council
Simon Bradley	Murray Bridge, Rural City of
Cr Clem Schubert	Murray Bridge, Rural City of
Barbara van der Meer	Individual
Cr Carol Muzyk	Playford, City of
Cr Shirley Halls	Playford, City of
Cr Arthur Mangos	West Torrens, City of
Cr Denis Clarke	Northern Areas Council
Rita Jackson	Individual
Pauline Frost	Individual
Cr Dino Zappacosta	Griffith City Council
Durgananda Chaudhary	Griffith City Council
Jack Terblanche	Hay Shire Council
Jackie Kruger	Leeton Shire Council
Cr George Weston	Leeton Shire Council
Cr Wesley Hall	Narrandera Shire Council
Siobhan Leslie	Murray Darling Basin Authority
Cr Ian Cole	Bourke Shire Council
Ken Rogers	Dubbo Regional Council
Lynton Auld	Dubbo Regional Council
Cr Phyllis Miller	Forbes Shire Council
John Zannes	Forbes Shire Council
Cr Craig Davies	Narromine Shire Council
Enrico Alessi	Narromine Shire Council
Melissa Ward	Narromine Shire Council
Cr Ian Davison	Cabonne Council
Ashley Wielinga	Warren Shire Council
Tim Hosking	NSW Office of Environment & Heritage
Debbie Love	NSW Office of Environment & Heritage
David Swan	LMWUA
Danielle Ranshaw	Western Research Institute
Wai Matthews	Western Research Institute
Tom Chesson	National Irrigators Council
Belinda Barlow	Orana ROC
Jack Bennett	Individual
Cr Phillip O'Connor	Brewarrina Shire Council
Dan Simmons	Brewarrina Shire Council
Wulf Reichler	Brewarrina Shire Council
Cr Frances Young	Gwydir Shire Council
Cr James Chaffey	Gunnedah Shire Council
Andrew Johns	Gunnedah Shire Council
Cr Owen Hasler	Gunnedah Shire Council
Nathan Gillies	Murray Darling Association

Melonie O'Rielly
Kerry Bliss
David Legge
Shannon Star

MDA - Support
MDA – Support
Master of Ceremonies
Dubbo Regional Council

2.2 Apologies

Hon Niall Blair	NSW Minister Primary Industries – Water
Hon Ian Hunter	SA Minister for Sustainability, Environment & Conservation
Hon Barnaby Joyce	Minister for Agriculture and Water Resources
Senator Fiona Nash	Minister for Regional Development
Tony Pasin MP	Federal Member for Barker
Hon Susan Ley MP	Federal Member for Farrer
Cr Steve Toms	Glenn Innes Severn Regional Council
Bob Stewart	Snowy Monaro Regional Council
Chris Norman	Goulburn Broken Catchment Management Auth.
Adrian Wells	Region 1
Ray Stubbs	RAMROC
Kevin Pell	Region 2
Cr Tyson Golder	Maranoa Regional Council
Rene Woods	Murray Lower Darling Rivers Indigenous Nations
Russell Peate	Mid-Murray Council
Cr Denis Davies	City of Playford
Cr Steve Toms	Glenn Innes Severn Regional Council
Cr Cathy Redding, Mayor	Narrabri Shire Council
Cr Tyson Golder	Maranoa Regional Council
Peter Kozlowski	Wentworth Shire Council
Cr Melissa Hedericks	Wentworth Shire Council
Helen Anstis	Baw Baw Shire Council
Cr Peter Hunt	Berri Barmera Council
David Beaton	Berri Barmera Council
Cr John Ferguson	Bulloo Shire Council
Michael Hayward	Bulloo Shire Council
Cr John Zobec	Campaspe Shire Council
Scott Mason	Central Highlands Regional Council
Cr Kerry Hayes	Central Highlands Regional Council
Cr Cathy Redding	Narrabri Shire Council
Cr Lindsay Godfrey	Paroo Shire Council
Chris Cowley	Paroo Shire Council
Cr Tracie Dobie	Southern Downs Regional Council
David Keenan	Southern Downs Regional Council
Cr Les McPhee	Swan Hill Rural Council
John McLindon	Swan Hill Rural Council
Julianna Phelps	Towong Shire Council
Cr David Wartman	Towong Shire Council
Ray Najar	Region 7
Jack Larkin	Life Member
Don Oberin	Life Member

Motion: That the apologies be accepted

Moved: P Frost/ Cr S Halls

Carried

3. PREVIOUS MINUTES

Meeting held 2015, Thursday 10 September 2015 Cobram Barooga Golf Club, Barooga

Motion: That the minutes of the previous AGM be adopted as an accurate record of that meeting, subject to a correction at 5.4, changing 'Cr Hall' to 'Cr Halls'.

Moved: Cr S Halls/Cr A Mangos Carried

4. REPORTS

4.1 2016 Annual Report

Motion: That the Murray Darling Association receive the Annual Report for the year ending 30 June 2016.

Moved: Cr D Thurley/Cr B Featherston Carried

4.2 2016 Annual Financial Report

Motion: That the Murray Darling Association adopt the 2016 Annual Finance Reports.

Moved: Cr P Jamieson/Mr I Mann Carried

4.3 Appointment of Auditor for 2016/17

Motion: That the Murray Darling Association appoint MGR Accountants to provide audit services for the 2016/17 financial year.

Moved: Cr P Jamieson/Cr B Featherston Carried

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.

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.

Motion: That the Murray Darling Association

- a) recognise, value and note the retention where possible of 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/Cr V Leng Carried

5.2 Strategic Plan 2016-2019

Background

The Murray Darling Association Strategic Plan 2016-19 provides 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 and 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.

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/Cr P Jamieson Carried

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.

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: G José/Cr P Miller Carried

5.4 **MDBA Regional Engagement Officers**

Background

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.

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 P Maytom/K Rogers Carried

5.5 **Regional Issues Map**

Background

Local government across the Basin shares the vision of a healthy Murray Darling Basin. 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/Cr F Tuckwell Carried

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.

Motion: 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 D Thurley/P Frost

Carried

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.

Motion: The Murray Darling Association calls on the government to make public the details of all and any action taken, or proposed to be taken regarding the implementation of the recommendations.

Moved: Cr B Featherston/I Mann

Carried

5.8 Darling River System

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: G José/Cr F Tuckwell

Carried

5.9 Lake Albert to Coorong Connector

Background

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: Cr V Leng/Cr A Mangos **Carried**

5.10 Management of the Lower Lakes

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: Cr V Leng/I Mann **Carried**

5.11 Long Nosed Fur Seals

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: Cr V Leng/Cr J Barrie **Carried**

5.12 Desalination and Clarence River diversions

- 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 schemes including Clarence River diversion. This investigation be coordinated with the Federal, State and Local Governments affected by need for more water.

Moved: Cr D Zappacosta/Cr B Featherston Carried

5.13 Climate Change

- 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: Cr C Schubert/M Scott Carried

5.14 Blue Green Algae Background

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/Cr S Halls Carried

5.15 Motion for meeting critical human water needs

Background

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 Murray Darling Association

- i) 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, and
- ii) 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: A Bland/Cr V Leng Carried

5.16 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: Cr A Sakko/I Mann Carried

5.17 Tourism

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: Cr A Mangos/Cr S Halls Carried

5.18 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.

(Some delegates expressed confusion/misunderstanding as to what AHD means, and how it is measured.)

Moved: G José/E Bradbury **Lost**

6. NEXT MEETING

Renmark -Paringa, SA in September/October 2017 – date to be confirmed

Location of 2018 AGM: Region 9, Murrumbidgee

7. MEETING CLOSE: 5.00pm